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THE

WORCESTER PULPIT;

WITH NOTICES

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL:

BY

REV. E. SMALLEY, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE UNION CHURCH, WORCESTER, MASS.

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TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCHES

AND

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES

IN

WORCESTER,

THIS VOLUME,

INTENDED TO PRESERVE THE MEMORY

OF THEIR RELIGIOUS TEACHERS,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE

AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

A RIGHT view of the past, will contribute to wise conduct in the future. A true knowledge of those who have gone before us, will facilitate an acquaintance with ourselves. To separate the present from the past, were it practicable, would be ruinous; we could not do it if we would, we would not if we could. Yet there is great danger, in the hot excitement of present life, of practically forgetting the wholesome lessons that are read to us by other days and other scenes. Long ago, it was said by John Owen, "The world is at present in a mighty hurry, and being in many places cast off from all foundations of steadfastness, it makes the minds of men giddy with its revolutions, and disorderly in the expectations of them." If this was true two centuries ago, it is true with an emphasis to-day. There is nothing of caricature, scarcely a spice of exaggeration in the remark of one of our elegant writers, that "men seem resolved upon bringing the time speedily about, when they may look around them, and reversing the declaration of the wise man, be able to say, There is nothing *old* under the Sun!"

It is wise, then, at times to withdraw from the hurry of the present, and expatiate amid the dim, but instructive silences of the past. 'What were prospect to us, without retrospect? A strange land without a guide.' A wise forecast is becoming in man; but to look forward wisely, we must often and thoughtfully look backward. Whatever, therefore, has a fitness to turn men's thoughts to the lessons of history, is so far valuable.

Impressed with these views, the writer of this volume has aimed to bring together, in a readable form, the more important facts respecting the church and the pulpit of Worcester: for if general history has its useful bearings upon the mind and life, the history of the church, addressing itself to the spiritual nature of man, must have pre-eminent importance From the inception of the undertaking to the present moment, he has found an increasing interest in it, and he is not without hope that the work will in some degree, combine both instruction and entertainment for the reader. He has been much indebted to *Lincoln's History of Worcester* in his preparations for the press, and hereby expresses his thanks to the brother of that author, the Hon. John W. Lincoln, for permission to make free use of its facts and statements. To all others who have kindly lent him their aid in furnishing

illustrations for the Pulpit,' he would return due acknowledgment. He would also express his regret that he could not find room for all the contributions forwarded by his friends. At first, he doubted whether he should be able to command the materials requisite for a respectable volume; but the work in its progress so grew upon his hands, and the matter for its pages became so abundant, that a severe abridgment was often found indispensable in order to keep the work within reasonable dimensions. It will be seen that the Pulpit illustrations not only exhibit great diversity in respect of style and literary excellence, but also contain opinions that are not in precise accordance with each other. Where selections were to be made from the pulpit ministrations of several denominations of Christians, of course no other result could be anticipated. The candid reader will doubtless recognize and cheerfully allow the right of each one who speaks in this Pulpit, to express his own thoughts in his own way, and hold the Editor responsible for no sentiment which he has not either directly, or indirectly endorsed. It was no part of his intention to prepare a work which should gratify a few at the expense of being offensive to the many. He desired that each denomination, with its pulpit, should be presented fairly; and, although he could wish that the work were a far less imperfect realization of his intention, yet, such as it is, he now commits it to the indulgent regards of those for whom it was principally intended, with the hope that its historical notices, and biographical sketches will increase their respect for the men who have passed away, and that the counsels and admonitions of its Pulpit may fall upon willing ears, and aid in making better the heart and the life.

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THE WORCESTER PULPIT.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE TOWN.

§ 1. *First Settlement.*

The history of our Pilgrim Fathers can never lose its interest, either for their descendants or for the civilized world. Their 'persecutions for righteousness' sake,' voluntary exile from the land of their birth, and emigration to this then wilderness world, have, with all the sternness of reality, more than the interest of romance. Their spirit was peculiar. It was characterized not only by religious fervor, and heroic bravery, but also by indomitable enterprise. Their piety was not of the dreamy or anchoretic kind, but energetic, robust, diffusive. Their heart in the heavens, their eye was keen to observe the indications of Divine providence; at the same time, they had wise forethought, and large practical sagacity respecting things 'seen and temporal.' Plymouth, Salem, Lynn and Boston received, but could not confine them. They were soon on the outlook for eligible places, in which to plant the germs of new towns and villages. In less than half a century from the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, meas-

ures had been taken for the settlement of what is now the city of Worcester. Grants of land made by the government to different individuals in 1657, 1662, and 1664, were subsequently designated and set off by them near the small lake called Quinsigamond. The name of this beautiful sheet of water was given to the new settlement, and long after retained by it. In 1665, the ‘ Great and General Court,’ of the Colony appointed a Committee* to survey this locality, to ascertain whether it be a ‘ meet place for a plantation.’ This Committee having been prevented from performing that service, another was empowered by the same authority in 1667, ‘ to take an exact view, as soon as conveniently they can, to make true report whether the place be capable to make a village, and what number of families, they conceive, may be there accommodated. And if they find it fit for a plantation, then to offer some meet expedient how the same may be settled, and improved for the public good.’ This Committee, having attended to the duty assigned them, made a favorable report,† from which one or two extracts will not be without interest to the present occupants of what was Quinsigamond.

“ We conceive it expedient, that the honored Court will be pleased to reserve it for a town, being conveniently situated, and well watered with ponds and brooks, and lying near midway between Boston and Springfield, about one day’s journey from either : and for the settling thereof we do offer unto the Court that which follows : viz.

That there be a meet proportion of land granted and laid

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* Appendix, A.

† Colony Records, IV., 624,—as quoted in Lincoln’s History of Worcester, p. 3.

out for a town, in the best form the place will bear, about the contents of eight miles square :

That a prudent and able committee be appointed and empowered to lay it out ; to admit inhabitants, and order the affairs of the place, in forming the town, granting lots, and directing and ordering all matters of a prudential nature, until the place be settled with a sufficient number of inhabitants, and persons of discretion, able to order the affairs thereof, in the judgment of the Court :

That due care be taken by said committee, that a good minister of God's word be placed there, as soon as may be ; that such people as may be there planted, may not live like lambs in a *large* place."

The Committee estimated that this " tract of very good chestnut tree land," would accommodate about thirty families, exclusive of the grants which had been made to individuals, and, inclusive of those grants, about sixty families. Those who now behold a population of more than seventeen thousand within the limits of considerably less than these eight miles square,* note what a centre they have become for a large and populous County, number the railroads that converge to a point here, and appreciate the capabilities of the place, with its prospects of increasing population and wealth, will not regard the estimate as ex travagant.

Notwithstanding the favorable report of the Committee, untoward circumstances retarded the settlement of the

* In 1740, the northerly part of Worcester was set off into a distinct town, with the name of Holden ; and in 1778, 2200 acres, with the inhabitants thereon, were taken from this town to aid in forming the town of Ward,— now Auburn. See Whitney's History of Worcester County, p. 27.

place for several years. Not until 1674, was the work fairly begun. In the Spring of that year, a few individuals laid out house lots, and began to build, and to break up the soil. Embarrassed by the claim of a private individual, the committee of settlement had recourse to the legislative authority, and a petition to the General Court signed by thirty-three men who contemplated settlement here, was followed by an adjustment of the difficulties. The next step was to propitiate the Indians in the neighborhood. On the 13th of July, 1674, a deed was executed by the Sagamores of Tataesit and Packachoag, conveying to the Committee of settlement, and the people admitted, and to be admitted, as inhabitants, a tract of eight miles square. The 'consideration' was 'twelve pounds in lawful money, or the full value thereof in other specie to the content of the grantees, within three months after date, to be paid and satisfied.'* The deed was attested with great formality, and the whole transaction is indicative of fairness and good faith, in both the parties concerned in it.†

In 1675 the few settlers actually on the ground prosecuted their work with vigor, and the 'village' had some six or seven houses. At the commencement of "Philip's War," the inhabitants 'had built after the manner of a town,'‡ and were greatly encouraged in their labors by the promise of success. But that war, sending dismay through the Colony, interrupted the prosperity of this infant settlement, and caused the inhabitants to abandon their dwellings and repair to the larger towns.

It was high time. "The war, on the part of the Indians, was one of ambushes and surprises. They never once met

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* Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Lib. 8, Fol. 317.

† Appendix, B. ‡ Hubbard's Nar. 135.

the English in open field; but always, even if eight-fold in numbers, fled timorously before infantry. But they were secret as beasts of prey. By the rapidity of their descent, they seemed omnipresent among the scattered villages, which they ravaged like a passing storm, and for a full year they kept all New England in a state of terror and excitement. The exploring party was waylaid and cut off, and the mangled carcasses and disjointed limbs of the dead were hung upon the trees to terrify pursuers. The laborer in the field, the reapers as they went forth to the harvest, men as they went to mill, the shepherd's boy among the sheep, were shot down by skulking foes, whose approach was invisible. The forest, that protected the ambush of the Indians, secured their retreat. They hung upon the skirts of the English villages, 'like the lightning on the edge of the clouds.'

"What need of repeating the same tale of horrors? Brookfield was set on fire, and rescued only to be abandoned. Deerfield was burned. Hadley, surprised during a time of religious service, was saved only by the daring of Goffe, the regicide, now bowed with years, a heavenly messenger of rescue, who darted from his hiding-place, rallied the disheartened, and having achieved a safe defence, sunk away into his retirement, to be no more seen. The plains of Northfield were wet with the blood of Beers, and twenty of his valiant associates. Springfield was burned, and Hadley once more assaulted. The remoter villages were deserted; the pleasant residences, that had been won by hard toil in the desert, the stations of civilization in the wilderness, were laid waste."*

* Bancroft's History of United States, Vol. II., pp. 103, 104.

In December, 1675, the few buildings that had been erected here, deserted by the owners, were destroyed by the Indians. Increase Mather interprets this event as a significant indication of God's displeasure against the Colony. It occurred as the troops were about to march against the Narragansets. He says, "But before they set out, the churches were all upon their knees before the Lord, the God of armies, intreating His favor and gracious success in that undertaking. This day of Prayer and Humiliation was observed December 2d; when, also, something happened, intimating as if the Lord were still angry with our prayers; for, this day, all the houses in Quonsukamuck [Quinsigamond], were burnt by the Indians."*

§ 2. *Second Settlement.*

Philip's War, as others, left desolation in its track. It was years before its ravages disappeared. Men who had personally suffered from the blows inflicted by its savage hand, could not at once recover from the shock. The restorative influence of time must be put in requisition. Quinsigamond had been destroyed; who should rebuild it? The labors of hardy and enterprising men had issued in disappointment; who should renew them? The place, remote from the larger settlements, was exposed to incursions from any foes that might lurk in its vicinity; and although no immediate danger was to be apprehended, yet the recollections of 1675 were still vivid. The Planters were directed by the Committee of settlement, to recommence their labors

* Mather's History, 19.

before 1680; but they replied, 'There was no going by any of them, or hope that they would do so; for divers of them being importuned to go, would not.' In March 3, 1678, [N. S. March 14, 1679], a number of individuals, some of whom had been prominent in the first settlement, entered into an agreement, 'that, God willing, they intend and purpose, if God spare life, and peace continue, to endeavor, either in their persons, or by their relations, or by their purses, to settle the said plantation sometime the next summer, come twelve month; which shall be in the year of our Lord, 1680.'

This, like many other good resolutions, had existence only on paper, never having been translated into fact. Not until 1684, did the work of rebuilding the town begin in earnest. The proprietors threatened with the forfeiture of their grant, unless speedy measures should be taken to form a plantation, forthwith put their hands to the work. During this year, by the authority of the General Court, the name of the place was changed from Quinsigamond to Worcester. The particular reasons for the change cannot now be assigned. Probably some of the Committee or planters were from Worcester, in England,* and had a partiality for the name. Thus applied, it would suggest inter-

* The word is said to have been derived from the Saxon *Wegera-ceaster*, equivalent to *war castle*, and indicative of the military character of the place to which the martial people of a remote antiquity applied it. See Henry's England, II., 538.

The city of Worcester in England, is the capital of a Shire, and situated on the banks of the Severn. It has a population of about 20,000. It is noted for its Cathedral, and has a flourishing trade in gloves and porcelain. In 1651, it was the scene of a sanguinary battle between Cromwell and the Prince, afterwards Charles II. Cromwell was accustomed to call his triumph here, his *crowning mercy.*

esting associations with the past. In 1685, partial surveys of the territory were made, and lots of land, varying in size from 80 acres to 200 acres, were assigned to different individuals. From 1686 to 1713, no record of the transactions of the settlement have been preserved. What were the labors and improvements of the planters during the last fourteen years of the century; to what dangers they were exposed, and what trials called to endure, how rapidly they advanced in population, what number of dwellings they had erected, and what was their style of living, we have no definite knowledge. It is certain that they had not reached the dignity of an organized town, and that their municipal affairs were under the direction of committees, other than themselves.*

Early in the eighteenth century, there was war again between the Colonists and the Indians. In 1702, 'Queen Anne's war' began; and though Worcester was not so severe a sufferer, from the loss of life in this war as many other places, it yet shared in the general alarm, and the second effort for its settlement soon became, at first doubtful, and then hopeless. As the tomahawk again thirsted for blood, and the flames leaped again towards their dwellings, they fled before the imminent danger, and left their possessions as a prey to the destroyer.† "The inhabitants fled; the place of their residence was delivered up to decay; the traces of cultivation were effaced; and the silence of ruin was again over the forsaken farms and deserted homes." (Lincoln, 35.)

* "General Gookin, the early and faithful friend of the plantation, was called to the rewards of a long life, characterized by fervent piety, enlightened benevolence, incorruptible integrity, and the practice of every manly virtue, in March, 1687." Lin. Hist. 33.

† Appendix, C.

§ 3. *Third Settlement.*

In 1713, a third and successful attempt was made to settle this town. Colonel Adam Winthrop, Gershom Rice, and Jonas Rice, of Marlborough, in behalf of themselves and others interested, addressed the General Court, in October of this year, expressing a desire 'to endeavor and enter upon a new settlement of the place from which they had been driven by the war,' and praying 'for the countenance and encouragement of the Court in their undertaking; for such directions and regulations as should be thought fit to make them defensible in case of a new rupture with the Indians; and for a proper Committee to direct in ordering the prudentials of the plantation, till they come to a full settlement.'*

The prayer of the petitioners was granted. A Committee of five gentlemen were appointed, who, having adjusted the claims of former settlers, and made wise arrangements for the prosperity of the future plantation, presented their report to the General Court, June 14, 1714. The report was accepted, and Governor Dudley affixed his signature to it.

On the 21st of October, 1713, Jonas Rice, who had shared the vicissitudes of the second settlement, returned to the place, to commence rebuilding what had been twice destroyed. About a year and a half, himself and family were the only inhabitants of Worcester. He was a man of heroic daring, great firmness of purpose, and incorruptible integrity. With his coming here, dates the permanent

* Proprietors' Records.

settlement of the town. In 1715, others joined him, who proved to be worthy and efficient instruments in laying the 'foundations for future generations.' The first of the new comers was his brother Gershom.* The enterprise became more and more prosperous. At the expiration of three years, the village contained nearly sixty dwelling houses, and about two hundred inhabitants. The edifices were unpretending, mostly of logs, one story in height, with large chimneys of stone; but the occupants were hardy and enterprising, and, intent on a noble end, thought little of what would now be considered as serious privations. Though few could afford to light their dwellings with 'diamond glass,' and the most of them had nothing better than 'oiled paper' for windows; yet, their eye of faith boldly piercing the future, they saw motive enough to animate their deepest principles, and evoke their best energies.

Every year added to their numbers and resources. Relieved of the difficulties which embarrassed those who had twice before attempted a settlement here, they soon became so numerous, and acquired so much property, that it was inconvenient for them to continue longer under the administration of Committees, whose centre of operation was not among themselves. A petition for incorporation

* Jonas and Gershom Rice removed from Marlborough. Some eighty years before they came to Worcester, their ancestor Richard, was one of the proprietors of Concord, 1635. The family was remarkable for the longevity of its members. Gershom's father died at the age of 70; his mother at 84. Of their fourteen children, three died in infancy, and all the others lived to advanced age. Peter died at 97; Thomas at 94; Mary at 80; Nathaniel at 70; Ephraim at 71; James at 72; Sarah at 80; Frances at 96; Jonas at 84; Grace at 94; and Gershom survived till 1769, aged 101 years. His wife died at 80; they had lived together in marriage nearly 65 years. Seven children survived their parents; and at the death of their father, some of them were more than 70 years of age. See Boston Gazette, 1769.

was presented to the General Court, in 1721. Others soon followed; and, on the 14th of June, 1722, nearly one hundred and thirty years ago, the Legislature passed a Resolve, conferring upon the inhabitants of Worcester the powers and privileges of other towns in the province. In pursuance of this Resolve, a meeting was legally convoked on the 28th of September following, the proper officers were chosen, and this became a regularly organized town.

During this early period of the history of Worcester, it is interesting to learn that the settlers were not unmindful of the education of their children, and that they cherished a deep reverence for the institutions of religion. In the Committee's report made in 1668, it is particularly recommended 'that due care be taken, that a good Minister of God's Word be placed there, as soon as may be.' In the plan proposed by the Committee of settlement, in 1669, it was specified, "that the most convenient place, nearest the middle of the town, should be set apart and improved for placing the meeting-house, for the worship of God; a convenient lot of fifty acres for the first minister, should be laid out as near it as might be; another lot, in the next convenient place, not far from thence, for the ministry that should succeed in all future times; that twenty acres should be reserved, near the centre, for a training-field, and to build a school-house upon; that a lot, of twenty-five acres, should be appropriated for the maintenance of a school and schoolmaster, to remain for that use forever." Though these regulations were not carried into effect, they shew something of the spirit of those who were engaged in the early settlement of the place. When the second settlement was projected, in a paper drawn up and signed by the

friends of the enterprise, the two following reasons were assigned, with others, for engaging in the work: "for the better *convenity* of attending God's worship;" and "for the better education of their children in society." Soon after the commencement of the third settlement, the few inhabitants began to assemble in the most convenient private dwellings for worship on the Sabbath; and, until the gathering of a church, they showed in the most expressive way practicable in their circumstances, that the spirit of true religion informed their minds and animated their hearts. Not unfrequently were these pioneers of Christianity and civilization exposed to imminent danger, even while in the act of public worship. As the speaker wielded 'the sword of the Spirit,' the hearer had his musket by his side, to guard against hostile attacks from the Indians. It was ordered by the Colony Court in 1675, 'that every man that comes to meeting on the Lord's day, bring with him his arms, with at least six charges of powder and shot.'* Sometimes the worship of the solemn assembly was interrupted by the cry that the Indian was upon them. The religious feeling which prompted and maintained regular public worship in the presence of such danger, was neither shallow nor ephemeral. The sentiment of reverence must have been deep and all-pervading; the spirit of obedience cordial, persistent and universal. Judging from such specimens, we can easily believe that "New England was a religious plantation, not a plantation for trade. The profession of the purity of doctrine, worship,

* "Also, that whosoever shall shoot off a gun, at any game whatsoever, except at an Indian or a wolf, shall forfeit 5*s*. on such default, until further order."

and discipline, was written on her forehead." We may not doubt, that 'he who made religion as twelve, and the world as thirteen, had not the spirit of a true New England man.' We respond to the utterance of the distinguished statesman, "New England was the colony of conscience." The Puritan "cherished hope; he possessed faith; as he walked the earth, his heart was in the skies. Angels hovered round his path, charged to minister to his soul."*

* Bancroft, I., p. 462.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY.

§ 1. *Gathering of the Church.*

It has already been stated that the first inhabitants of Worcester assembled regularly for public worship on the Sabbath, as soon as their circumstances would permit. Mr. Gershom Rice, being one of the first on the ground, was the first to open his doors for divine service. A private dwelling soon having become too strait for the accommodation of the growing population, the enterprise of religious devotion erected a larger edifice, in which the people might unitedly pay their homage to the Most High. The structure was neither costly nor elegant; but being both commodious and respectable, it met the exigencies of the case. It was an expression at once of devotional and of public spirit. It indicated reverence for God and a wise forecast for the safety and prosperity of those who had, and those who were to come. This first meeting-house, rudely constructed from the logs of the forest, was situated a few rods southeasterly from what is now 'the Common,' just at the point where Franklin and Green streets unite. It was built in 1717. There, for two years, our pious predecessors were accustomed to assemble on the holy Sabbath, to commune with God and encourage each other under the trials of their common pilgrimage. Every thing around them must deeply have impressed it upon their hearts, that

here they had no 'abiding place,' and excited them to seek that 'city which hath foundations.' It should not surprise us to learn that the Omniscient eye recognized more of the spirit of true worship in that rude structure, than it now beholds in many a gorgeous temple.

With improved circumstances, the people began to meditate improved accommodations for public worship. Their first house of worship had answered the end for which it was reared, but it was intended only for a temporary expedient, and not for a permanent arrangement. Accordingly, in 1719, desire which had ripened into purpose, began to show itself, in efforts for the erection of a more convenient and spacious edifice, on the site of the present Old South meeting-house.*

The people had now become so numerous and their resources had so increased, that they could no longer content themselves without the regular ministrations of the word by a settled minister of the Gospel. They had obeyed the direction of 'the Committee of grantees, that, until regular instruction should be obtained, the Lord's day should be sanctified, by assembling together for devotional exercises;'†

* This meeting-house was built under a contract with Mr. Constable, as architect, where the present South Church now stands. It was sufficiently capacious to accommodate the population then gathered here, but had no tower. Simple benches were the first pews. It had no pulpit until 1723. Then long seats were provided, and soon after galleries constructed. The town voted in 1733, 'that the front of the gallery, the pulpit, and pillars, be colored and varnished, and the outside of the doors and windows; and the town thankfully accepts the £8 offered by Col. Chandler, towards the same; and being informed that Daniel Gookin, Esq. has been pleased to say, he would give something to said work, voted, that a committee be desired to know of him what he will give towards said coloring and varnishing.' Ten years afterwards, 1743, a spire was erected.

† Lin. Hist., p. 163.

but they wisely thought that they could not afford to live longer without a pastor and teacher of their own. Though it would cost them much, in their poverty, to sustain a preacher of the word, it would cost them far more not to do it. But the calling and settlement of a pastor, pre-supposes the gathering and organization of a church. Though all, or nearly all* of the first settlers of Worcester were probably professed Christians, it was needful that separate individuals should form themselves into an ecclesiastical body by entering into covenant with Christ and with each other, before they could exercise the powers and enjoy the privileges of a church. In common with the Puritan Congregationalists of New England, they "conceived themselves fully warranted by the Scriptures, in maintaining that a number of Christians, duly organized to that end, may constitute a true Church of Christ, possessing the power of self-preservation and government under the direc-

* Not to be a regular member of the church, was to subject one's self to very serious disabilities. For the law had been in force in this State more than three-quarters of a century, 'that none should be admitted to the freedom of the body politic, but such as were church-members.' It appears from Hutchinson that 'this most extraordinary law was in fact continued in force until the dissolution of the charter government—1785—though it was repealed in appearance after the restoration of King Charles the second.' As, at the time this order was passed, none were admitted to the church who did not, in the judgment of charity, give credible evidence of a change of heart, the number soon became large of those who were denied the exercise of the elective franchise, and excluded from all civil offices. These naturally became uneasy, and soon began to insist that all persons who had been baptized in infancy, should be treated as members of the church—admission to the Lord's table excepted—and be permitted, on owning the covenant, to have their children baptized, that *they* also might afterwards enjoy their civil rights. After much discussion and no little opposition, the practice was recommended, first by a general council in 1657, and again in 1662, by a synod, and was thenceforward known under the name of the Half-way covenant.

tion of the great Head of all churches and to His glory; such being the primitive and Apostolical model."* Their response to the following reasoning of their predecessors and contemporaries, was prompt and cordial: "And now if it be a duty in Christians to glorify God and the Saviour, to improve their religious gifts and to promote their religious well being, in other respects; if it be a duty to act in accordance with the natural tendencies of the Christian life, and, in a word, to obey the undoubted requisitions of Christ, then it obviously appears to be their duty to unite together in churches."†

Impressed with these sentiments, the Christian men and women of Worcester began to contemplate the organization of a church, soon after the third and permanent settlement of the town. They who had enjoyed the ordinances of the Gospel elsewhere, could consent to be deprived of them in their new abode no longer than necessity made it imperative that they should. To be denied the privilege of listening to the instructions of their own public teacher and communing together at the table of their Lord, was one of the greatest of their privations, and one of the severest of their trials. As soon, therefore, as Providence opened the way for them, they proceeded, with solemn gladness, to form themselves into a regular church of Christ. What was the precise date at which their cherished plans ripened into execution, cannot now be certainly known. Of the day on which the church was organized, the services that gave solemnity to the occasion, and the subsequent proceedings of the body antecedent to 1722, unfortunately, no records are extant to give us information. Mr. Lincoln, in

* Ratio Disciplinæ, p. 48. † Ibid, p. 51.

his History of Worcester,* says, "Soon after the last permanent settlement, a church was gathered, and Deacons Daniel Heywood and Nathaniel Moore, elected its officers." This 'soon after' must include several years; for, in the spring of 1715, there was but one family in Worcester, and that 'permanent settlement' dates back to the autumn of 1713. Probabilities unite in assigning the organization of the First Church to the year 1719.† The population of the place was then probably not far from three hundred souls. The people were leaving their log meeting-house, and entering the more commodious one on the Common. They were preparing for the settlement of a minister; and a church with officers chosen from its own numbers, was a preliminary measure. It may have been a year or two earlier; but we have no means of ascertaining the precise time. The first officers chosen by the church were Daniel Heywood and Nathaniel Moore. Mr. Moore was the third individual who aided in the permanent settlement of the town; and he lived to an advanced age, highly respected for the excellences of his character. His associate also was a prominent man in his day, and discharged the trusts committed to him with fidelity and success.

Such, in brief, are the facts which history brings to our knowledge of the origin of the First Church in Worcester. While we would gladly learn more of those, who opened the fountain from which such rich blessings have flowed down to us, we are thankful to know something of them. 'They rest from their labors and their works do follow them.' Professedly revering their memory, we may not practically

* P. 164.

† Whitney's Hist. of Worcester County, p. 30.

deny the spirit of their example. 'Though dead, they yet speak.'

The church regularly organized, and the people desiring a stated ministry, the way was prepared for the immediate settlement of a pastor. In connection with the progress of the church, then, we come in the regular sequence of events, to the history of the Pulpit in Worcester. The first minister ordained over this church, was the

§ 2. Rev. Andrew Gardner.

His public consecration took place in the autumn of 1719. Neither the day nor the month is known. Who officiated in the solemnities of that occasion, we have no means of ascertaining. The connection formed, Mr. Gardner commenced his labors, it may be presumed, with a reasonable prospect of success. But whether he consented to be the minister of the people without a sufficient acquaintance with them, or they invited him to settle before they knew his peculiar temperament and habits, it may not now be easy to determine; one thing was soon apparent; and that was, that the parties were not suited to each other. They had voted him, at his settlement, a gratuity of £60. What his salary was to be, is matter of conjecture. The fact that, in 1722, £40, of the currency of that day, were voted for the support of public worship, may perhaps be some guide to it. Whatever the amount was, he soon began to complain, that what was voted, was not paid; and that the gratuity promised was not a gratuity in fact. Very naturally this remissness on their part had an unhappy influence

upon the performance of his duties. At any rate, it was alleged by the people, that he was culpably deficient in the discharge of his ministerial obligations; that the spirit which he manifested was not becoming in a preacher of the Gospel; that he was more eager in the chase of the deer, than in pursuit of his people's good; and that he loved the sports of the hunter, more than he panted for the salvation of souls. Complaints were met with complaints in return, criminations begat recriminations, until all prospect of usefulness on his part entirely disappeared. Some who had welcomed him with gladness to this field of labor, became so disaffected with the improprieties of his ministerial life, that they would neither attend on his public ministrations, nor aid in his pecuniary support. In their growing embarrassments, the people invoked aid from the Legislature; but no relief from this source was afforded them. The advice of an ecclesiastical council, Sep. 1721, failed to reconcile minds mutually and so deeply alienated. All other means of removing the difficulty having failed,* the

* In this connection, the following letter of Cotton Mather, who, with others, had been applied to for advice, will not be without interest. It is from the original manuscript in his own hand-writing. Its date is

"5th November, 1720.

REVEREND SIR,

A representation made unto us, from a considerable number of the inhabitants of the town of *Worcester*, has procured you the trouble of the letter now before you.

We look on ourselves as incompetent judges of a matter, which we have seen represented by only one of the parties; nor would we be forward, even upon the fullest information, to interpose our judgment in an affair, which the servants of God in your neighborhood have under their more proper cognizance.

Yet you will allow us to offer you our opinion, that a plantation in its infancy ought to be under a very tender management, lest it be thrown into ruinous confusions, from which it may not be presently extricated; and that

General Court was again entreated to interpose its authority for their relief.' Accordingly, a resolve was passed by that body, June 14th, 1722, 'that it be earnestly recommended to that council which did meet in Worcester, in September, 1721, to whom the contending parties submitted their differences, relating to the Rev. Andrew Gardner, that the said council proceed and go to Worcester, on or before the first Wednesday of September next, to finish what is farther necessary to be done for the procuring and establishing of peace in the said town, according to the submission of the parties.'

'The elders and messengers of the several churches, appointed to meet at Worcester, for deciding the differences in that church, declining to go thither by reason of the rupture with the Indians—it being a frontier place; it was

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when the gathering of a church and the ordaining of a minister is in prosecution, and a strong opposition is made unto it by a considerable number of the inhabitants (though they should not be a majority, but near an equality) and such as are sober Christians, and offer weighty reasons of their dissatisfaction, which they are also willing to lay before authentic judges, there should in such case be no sudden or hasty proceedings. The glorious Lord seems in his providences, to put a stop unto the present proceedings, and require that something further be done, (either by a Council of neighbor churches, or some other such expedient) for the settlement of truth with peace among a divided people, that so the great ends of the Gospel may not, in the pursuance of some inferior interests, be disappointed.

We cannot but wish that you may, with the wisdom which comes from above, so far consider the divided state of *Worcester*, as to delay what they tell us is now driving on, until you have had all the advice which you shall apprehend necessary to prevent a sad and long train of evil consequences.

May He, among whose glorious titles is that of Counsellor, guide you by His counsel on this occasion.

In Him, we are, Sir,

Your most affectionate Brethren."

To Mr. Swift.

recommended that the ministers meet at Dedham, for the affair aforesaid.'

In pursuance of this direction of the General Court, the council met at Dedham, to deliberate and decide respecting ecclesiastical matters in Worcester. The whole case was presented before them, and carefully considered by them. Prayerful deliberation conducted them to the result, that it is expedient that the relation subsisting between Mr. Gardner and his church be dissolved, 'his temporal interest being secured.' The advice was followed, and the dissolution took place, the 31st of October, 1722. But though the pastoral connection was severed, the difficulties that had so long existed were not yet all healed. The Society was considerably in debt to Mr. Gardner; and, in order to recover the amount, he instituted a suit in law. This so incensed the people, that, in their haste, they voted not to allow him the gratuity of sixty pounds which was formerly promised him, and which he had 'left to the generosity of the town.' Several of the more respectable citizens remonstrated against this vote, and their protest against it is on record. Mutual arbitration eventually reconciled these differences.

Mr. Gardner was born in Brookline, Mass. He was a member of Harvard University, during the time that the social position of parents affected and determined the places which their sons' names should occupy in the catalogue of the students. On the list of his class, young Gardner's name was last. He was graduated in 1712. What honors he bore away with him from academic halls, what advantages he enjoyed for the study of theology, how he employed himself during the seven years that intervened between his

graduation from Cambridge and his ordination in Worcester, or what particular qualities or influences recommended him to this people, we can only conjecture. The means of knowledge are at present beyond our reach. Subsequently to his departure from Worcester, we lose sight of him, until his installation as the first minister in Lunenburg, Mass., then Turkey Hills, on the 15th of May, 1728. His stipulated salary there, was only $35,55 of our currency. He had, in addition, the use of certain lands reserved for ministerial support. "This is apparently a very inadequate sum; but it will be recollected that money then, in consequence of its scarceness, was much more valuable than now, transactions between individuals being carried on principally by barter, and that it was intended that the minister should derive his principal support from the lands appropriated by the General Court."*

As if some invisible evil influences attended him, Mr. Gardner's second settlement was equally unhappy with the first. The acrimonious controversy which he maintained with the people of his former charge, could have been no recommendation of him to any other church; but it may be supposed that the five or six years which had elapsed since his dismission, must have modified the recollections of that unfortunate ministry, and that the mistakes of the past taught him wisdom for the future. Friendly relations, however, between him and his new charge were soon interrupted. Habits that had acquired the inveteracy of years, could not easily be laid aside; nor could old loves all at once be replaced by new. Passion for hunting followed the minister to a place where every facility for gratifying it

* Torrey's Hist. of Fitchburg, p. 33.

was offered, and the habits which it perpetuated and increased, gave a tone to his conversation and an aspect to his life in no wise favorable to his character as a clergyman. The evil might be endured for a period by a people charitably hoping for better things; but no Christian church, with a proper self-respect and a just sense of its own responsibility, could endure it long. The parish in Lunenburg, having borne with it as long as forbearance seemed to them a virtue, gave the incumbent unequivocal demonstration of their dislike of his mode of exercising the office of a bishop. Sensible that he had lost their confidence, and having no disposition to regain it by denying himself of the sport which he loved, he asked his dismission. His request was promptly granted; and thus terminated his second ministry, Feb. 7th, 1731–2. "The reasons of his dismission appear to have been these: He was not a man of that grave and sober demeanor, which the people of his time thought essential to the sacredness of his office. He was apt to indulge in a levity of manner on the Sabbath which was not in keeping with the solemnity of the day. He had also quite a predilection for hunting; and it is said wild turkeys and other game, even on the Sabbath, sometimes bore testimony to his skill as a marksman."* To some extent, this may be traditional; yet it can hardly be questioned, that the tradition has too much of truth for its basis. Rev. Zabdiel Adams, of Lunenburg, wrote to Mr. Whitney, that Mr. Gardner was dismissed "because he was unworthy." His receipt for settlement and salary during the period of his ministry in Lunenburg, was $175,32.

Though dismissed from his pastoral relations to the church

* Torrey's Hist. of Fitchburg, p. 34.

and parish, Mr. Gardner did not leave the town for several years. He was permitted to build, at his own expense, "a sufficient pew at the right hand of going in at the great doors of the meeting-house"—a station of distinguished honor.* The people that could not be satisfied with him as their spiritual guide, yet had sufficient confidence in him to engage his services for the instruction of their children. He was the first schoolmaster employed in the place, and for years taught the school in his own house. With what success he labored in this department, or whether he was more acceptable and efficient at the desk than in the pulpit, we have no means of deciding, other than the fact of his continued employment during successive years, and the absence of any record of complaint against him. On leaving Lunenburg, "he moved up nigh to Connecticut River, in New Hampshire State, where he died, but a few years since, [1793] in a very advanced age."† How he employed himself in his new place of residence, in what year he died, and what precisely was his age, patient and extended inquiry has not yet supplied the means of ascertaining.

To sketch the character of such a man as Mr. Gardner, would be a work of great delicacy, even if we had the most abundant materials for forming a just estimate of him. In the paucity of such materials, the work is far more difficult. Related to him as we are, we would by no means do him the shadow of an injustice; and yet we cannot but desire to see the man as he was. The colors that should truly portray his character might be darker than we wish, but the

* Torrey's Hist. of Fitchburg, p. 34.

† Whitney's Hist. of Worcester Co., p. 144.

shade of deepest hue would be relieved by a tincture of light. Historical facts and traditional reports unite in convincing us, that while the subject of our sketch was deficient in some qualities which are thought to be essential to a clergyman's usefulness, he yet exhibited traits of character which win regard and mitigate the severity with which he would otherwise be judged. His warm impulses, uncontrolled by discretion, independence of spirit and lack of practical common sense, united with a constitutional levity and passionate love of the chase, must seriously have derogated from his usefulness as a pastor and teacher. Christian men and women could neither respect nor be profited by a spiritual guide, in whom the earthly tendencies so obviously predominated over the heavenly. How imperfect soever themselves, they yet demanded that he who "pointed them to heaven," should "lead the way" thither. He must be to them "an example," not only in doctrine, but in life—not in precept alone, but in practice as well. The difference of sentiment and manners between that age and this duly considered, it will still be admitted, that incidents like the following would neither sustain the dignity nor add to the proper influence of a minister of the Gospel. Historical accuracy might not recognize their truth without a question, and perhaps the dignity of history would reject them, even if true ; but, having reached the present generation in the regular sequence of traditionary relations, they must have their influence as illustrations of a character in which many are interested. The oral report is, that, having been invited to dine with a friend, Mr. Gardner, by a secret substitution of stone for meat, so contrived it, that the host had nothing with which to regale his guest, but

"the unusual dish of boiled granite." The latter, however, was amply compensated for the loss of a savory meal, by the looks of inquisitive astonishment excited by his unique and before unattempted experiment in the economy of the kitchen.* Loquacious tradition also brings to our ear a singular incident as having occurred during Mr. Gardner's second settlement. "A great lover of dogs, dog language became as familiar to him as his own vernacular. Preaching from a manuscript on a certain occasion, and becoming embarrassed in his reading, either on account of illegible penmanship, or from some other cause, he burst forth from his restraint in a manner at once startling and effectual. To the amazement and grief of his serious hearers and the scandal of his profession, he suddenly and in no softened accents, exclaimed, *Steboy! Steboy!*"†

With all his eccentricities, however, he was a man of generous sympathies and ready beneficence. With warm heart and open hand, he 'gave to him that asked, and from him that would borrow he turned not away.' According to, and even beyond his means, he relieved the suffering and contributed to the necessities of the poor. But his very charities were characteristic of the man, and sometimes reduced him to a condition, of which it is difficult to say whether it was more pitiable or ludicrous. One Saturday, having been asked by a poor parishioner for shoes, he relieved the needy, by giving away the only pair of those useful articles which he had for himself. On the Sabbath following, he officiated in the morning with no covering for his feet but stockings, and in the afternoon, with the addi-

* Lincoln's Hist. p. 166. † Letter of Rev. A. Boutelle, Lunenburg.

tion of borrowed slippers, ludicrously disproportioned to the size of "his slender members."*

On the whole, we may believe that the principal defects of Mr. Gardner's character, were errors of the head rather than obliquities of the heart. That he was often at fault in judgment, is obvious to an eye not nicely critical;—that he was either corrupt in principle or hypocritical in intention, we must—not simply doubt, but—deny. If his large charity do not cover all his imperfections, it will at least soften the judgment that might otherwise be pronounced against him. The fact, too, that he was employed for years as a teacher in the place where he had served the people in the ministry, is evidence that he had redeeming qualities as a man and a Christian, though not acceptable as a pastor.

Inquiries have been instituted in every direction which promised success, to ascertain whether Mr. Gardner left any sermons in manuscript which can now be procured. These inquiries have yielded no satisfactory result; and it may be doubted whether any discoveries of value would reward a more extended research. Not a sermon—not a page, paragraph, or sentence of a sermon that he ever wrote or preached, is now, so far as is known, extant. How highly prized soever the briefest extract from a sermon of his would be by the present generation, there is no probability that either they or their successors will ever peruse such an extract. In the absence of every thing else that ever came from his pen, the following request of his for a dissolution of his pastoral relation to the church in Lunenburg, possesses an interest which would not otherwise attach to it.

* Relation of Daniel Goulding, Lincoln's Hist. p. 166.

"Beloved Brethren,—

I cannot but think from what I have heard, and also from what I have observed, of the transactions and behavior of this people, relating to me and my affairs, that there is not that affection borne toward me that there should be from a people to their Gospel minister, or that there is where a people are likely duly to profit under their minister,—the consideration whereof has been very grievous and discouraging to me, and therefore [I] think it best to separate; and if effectual care be taken that my dues be honestly paid me, the first minister's lot with its appurtenances be put upon record and accepted, and a sufficient pew at the right hand of going in at the great doors of the meeting-house, I shall be free to be dismissed from my pastoral relation, office, and obligation to you, as soon as it can regularly be performed.

From your loving Pastor, who wisheth you the Divine direction and blessing, and desires your prayers for the same to him.

Andrew Gardner, *Pastor.*

Lunenburg, Sept. 18, 1730."*

It may be suggested, that the reason why none of the sermons of Mr. Gardner have been preserved is, that none of them were worth preserving. If he was remiss in his clerical duties, and more devoted to the pastime of the chase than to the spiritual welfare of his people, it is easy to infer that nothing which emanated from his pen would have merit enough either to instruct or entertain, provided it were possible, at this late day, to obtain any thing. Still,

* Torrey's Hist. of Fitchburg, p. 33.

it is an occasion of regret, that it is now out of our power to judge of this, after actual examination. A few paragraphs thrown off in his happier modes, a single sermon preached at a funeral or before administering the Lord's Supper, or any production that would aid us in forming a tolerable estimate of his mental stature and quality, would be caught at with avidity. Those who now gaze upon the beautiful hill-tops which once greeted his eyes, and walk through the same valley that he was accustomed to tread—though possibly both are so changed, that were he to revisit, he would not recognize them—would give much to know what was his style of address in the pulpit, and with what truths and persuasions he was wont to present himself before the people of his charge. The fact that he was the *first* minister of the *first* church gathered here, increases our desire to see something from his pen, which would aid us in judging of the style of his composition and the tone of his preaching. In the same degree, it also deepens our regret that nothing of this description is within our reach. His written sermons and extempore effusions, his epistolary correspondence and whatever of diary he wrote, all now with equal facility hide themselves from our eyes, and forbid our approach to them. The inexorable Past holds them in its strong hand, and not one of them will it yield to our most diligent researches.

§ 3. Rev. Isaac Burr.

The pulpit, vacated by Mr. Gardner, was not immediately filled by a settled pastor. Still, the church and town made ample provision for the preaching of the Gospel.

Though engaged in a lawsuit with their late minister, they were not alienated from the ministry, or unmindful of the importance of divine ordinances. An examination of the early town records will show that to no subject was more earnest attention given, than to the support of public worship.* No means of improvement, whether civil, social, or moral, was more liberally or promptly provided for than this. Among others who supplied the pulpit from time to time, the Rev. Shearjashub Bourne preached so much to the satisfaction of his hearers, that he was invited to become the permanent minister of the place. A salary of £75, to be increased to £80 after five years, with a settlement of £100,† was offered him; but he could not be induced to accept the invitation, though it was thus generously enforced. Having completed his term of service here, he was settled in Scituate, Dec., 1724, and remained pastor of the church in that place till 1761. He died at the age of 69, and was interred in Roxbury. His monument bears this inscription:

> "Cautious himself, he others ne'er deceived,
> Lived as he taught, and taught as he believed."

Mr. Bourne having declined a settlement here, the Rev. Thomas White was invited by the church to become their pastor; but the town did not concur in the choice of him as their minister. They raised a committee, "to address Mr. White for his further assistance in the work of the Gospel."‡ Retiring from Worcester, he accepted an invitation from the first church in Bolton, Ct., and was ordained over them

* The compensation voted for the supply of the pulpit, was £2, 3*s.* each Sabbath. † Town Record. ‡ Ibid.

the 25th of Oct., 1725. His decease occurred in that place, 1763.

Undiscouraged by repeated failures, the people still persevered in their laudable attempts for the re-establishment of the ministry among them. Their next candidate proved to be the successful one. This was the Rev. Isaac Burr. The church and town concurred in calling him to be their pastor and teacher, Feb. 10th, 1725, and offered him £80 as his annual salary, with a settlement of £200, either in money or an equivalent in land. His ordination, as the second pastor of the church in Worcester, took place the 13th of the next October. The following churches, by their representatives, were invited to participate in the solemnities of the occasion: the church in Hartford and in Framingham, in Marlborough and in Lancaster, in Leicester and in Sudbury, in Weston and in Shrewsbury. For the entertainment of the council of ordination, ten pounds were appropriated.

Full of promise were the circumstances in which Mr. Burr commenced his ministry in Worcester. His people appear to have been cordially united in him, and he entered upon his new work with the ardor of youth and the confidence of hope. They were prepared to appreciate his labors, while he was willing to "spend and be spent" in their service. His devotion to their interests, winning their regards, provoked their liberality. Two or three extracts from their records will serve as a specimen of their generous bearing towards him. When some lack of promptitude in the payment of taxes was manifested, the following vote was passed, bearing the date of Sept. 25th, 1725: "That the inhabitants contribute, once a month, on the Lord's day, after divine service, for the support of the minister, until a

rate can be properly made; each person to paper up his money and subscribe his name on the paper; so that an account may be taken of each person's money, to be allowed on his rate when made." Under the depreciation of currency which took place in the province during this period of its history, the clergyman could not but suffer in his pecuniary interests, as well as others. Mr. Burr's people came to his relief, again and again, by voluntary contributions. Sensible that their spiritual teacher could not study to advantage without books, and aware that his mental improvement would re-act beneficently on themselves, they voted, Oct. 24, 1732,* in reply to a request of Mr. Burr, "that the town cheerfully grant him £20, and earnestly desire he would lay the same out in purchasing an addition to his library." They had a way of their own "to encourage him." When they suspected that he was at all straitened in his pecuniary circumstances, they promptly voted him a sum in addition to his stipulated compensation. From £80, with which he began his labors, his salary had been raised to £140. And because "bills of credit" were seriously depreciated, and it was desirable for the pastor to know on what he could depend, it was voted by the inhabitants, in 1741, "to make the salary equal to what money was at the time of his settlement, having regard to the difference between silver and paper;" an ounce of silver equaling twenty-nine shillings of paper.† With such evidences of union and affection on the part of his people, Mr. Burr continued his labors here with pleasure to himself and profit to them.

Nothing occurred seriously to interrupt the harmony that

* Town Records, Vol. I. p. 93. † Lincoln's Hist. of Worcester, p. 167.

existed between them, until after Whitefield's visit to Worcester, in the autumn of 1740. That wonderful man, in company with Governor Belcher, reached Worcester, Oct. 14, 1740. It was during his second visit to America. He was on his way from Boston to Northampton, to visit the great Edwards. The meeting of these two men—each, in his way, a prince among men—"was like putting fire to tinder."* On the 15th, Whitefield preached here, "in the open air, on the common, to some thousands; the word fell with weight indeed; it carried all before it."† Preaching so impassioned, eloquence such as never before had entranced the people, stirred the emotive nature to its centre. Waves of feeling were raised, which could not at once subside. Numbers were stimulated to crave a more animated and rousing style of address than they had before been accustomed to, and, not being gratified, were not slow to express dissatisfaction. Mr. Burr was too quiet and conservative to suit them. Holding on the 'even tenor of his way,' and unwilling to be rudely turned aside from the course he had been running so pleasantly for the sixth of a century, he would not surrender to the impulse of a disturbing force so violent in its action, what his judgment could not approve. The evil with which he would not compromise, however, had probably taken deeper root than he suspected; and it yielded fruits which he was reluctant to anticipate. Had it received no extraneous aid, it might have died out; but influences from abroad added to its vigor and increased its growth, until its product was realized in the dismission of the minister. The nature of these influences may be inferred from such incidents as the fol-

* Gillies. † Whitefield's Journal.

lowing. While Mr. Burr calmly pursued the conservative measures which his wisdom approved, some of his brethren among the clergy, greatly excited by the impassioned appeals of Whitefield, strove, according to their ability, by imitating his spirit and manner, to reproduce the impressions which followed his preaching. Not satisfied with doing their own work, in their own way, among their own people, they were ready to carry their new-born zeal into other parishes. One of these was the Rev. David Hall, of Sutton. Doubtless he was sincere in his desires to do good, but, from his diary, it is apparent that his labors in Worcester had no tendency to calm the agitated waters. "Jan. 22, 1742, O. S.," he thus writes:

"Preached this week twice in Worcester, in private houses. Mr. Burr gave his consent before I went: but seemed not pleased with my coming, as I was informed. I am grieved at my heart, to observe the violent opposition made against the work of God in the land, by those that are called his servants. But this I know, that wherein they deal proudly, the Lord is above them."

"Feb. 7. I am in great concern about religious matters, Mr. Burr of Worcester, refusing the urgent request of some people of Worcester, to hear me preach again with them. God seems to have blessed my poor labors, lately among them, for the awakening of some of them. But oh! the prejudice of Mr. B. who is, I fear, too much of a stranger to the power of godliness, or otherwise, surely, he would rejoice in having his people in concern about their souls, and in the help of such ministers as wish their salvation. Oh, that the Lord would forgive him and open his

eyes, and strengthen me, his poor unworthy worm, to be valiant in following the rules of my Redeemer."

"Nov. 30, 1744. This week Mr. Burr and his church part, under the direction of a council. The Lord stir up ministers to faithfulness by such providences."*

The Rev. Mr. Bliss of Concord, a minister of some distinction and one of those called '*new lights*,' preached sometimes in Worcester to such as demanded a more rousing manner of address than characterized Mr. Burr's preaching. Shattuck, in his 'History of Concord,' says that 'he had been requested by a multitude of souls' in Worcester to preach to them.

Amid elements agitated by such disturbing forces, Mr. Burr found the quiet of his life so broken up and his best considered plans so thwarted, that his health became seriously impaired and his prospect of usefulness greatly diminished. Disheartened by trials which he had no power to avert, he asked to be dismissed from the people whom he had served twenty years in the Gospel. A mutual council advised that his request be granted; and his dismission accordingly took place, in March, 1745.

The Rev. Isaac Burr was the son of Thomas Burr of Hartford, Ct.† He was graduated from Yale College, in

* See MSS. of Am. Antiquarian Soc. Lin. Hist. p. 169.

† Farmer represents him to be the son of the Hon. Peter Burr, chief justice of Ct., and the father of Rev. Aaron Burr, Pres. of New Jersey College. The latter cannot be true, if, as Lincoln says, Isaac Burr was born in 1698; for the President was born in 1714. Savage calls the latter, son—not the grandson—of Judge Burr. But Isaac was *not* the brother of Aaron, as Lincoln following Savage, states. He was the son of Thomas of Hartford, as appears from the Hartford Probate Records, on which is recorded an Inventory of his estate after his decease in Windsor, Ct.—Letter from E. Gleason, of the Connecticut Historical Society.

1717. Where he pursued his theological studies, in what places he exercised his talents as a preacher before coming to Worcester, or in what manner he employed his time between 1717, and 1725, it is impossible to tell. After his twenty years' ministry here, he retired to Windsor, Ct. His death occurred either in the latter part of 1751, or the early part of 1752.

That so little is known of the second pastor of the church in Worcester, is occasion of regret. Having left this scene of his labors more than a century ago, the memory of the oldest inhabitants now resident here, is utterly at fault respecting him. Even tradition has left him to slumber in the past. It has no piquant anecdote to relate of him, no information to give of his peculiarities of temper or mind or manners. No historical record is extant, to tell us how he looked or how he spoke, how he wrote or how he preached. It is in his favor, indeed, that he ministered to the same people for the fifth of a century, and that he was able to acquit himself to their general satisfaction. From this it is a probable inference, that he was a diligent student, a respectable preacher and devoted pastor. But the probability falls considerably short of certainty in this case; for, it is known that about this period not a few had entered the ministry with little evidence of devotion to God or experimental religion, and that their preaching tended rather to quiet their people in a supreme attachment to the world, than to stimulate them to 'seek first the kingdom of God.' The following portraiture was drawn for many who exercised the office of the ministry previously to 1740. "They were grave men, in *speculation* evangelical, or *moderately* so; and performed their customary ministerial duties with

regularity; but their preaching lacked point, and earnestness, and application; their devotional services were without warmth and unction; their labors were not blessed of the Holy Spirit; their people slumbered; the tone of religious feeling and sentiment was sinking; and true godliness seemed fast retiring from the land."* While we should be unwilling to believe that any approach to this state of things existed under Mr. Burr's ministry, we cannot infer so much as, in other circumstances, we might, from the fact that he pursued a peaceful ministry here for so many years. At a time when the 'half-way covenant' was the general practice of the churches, when the Lord's Supper was regarded as a 'converting' ordinance, and when unconverted persons were freely admitted to the communion, it was by no means certain that the pastor who preached so as to produce no unhappy excitement, was *therefore* a 'man full of faith and the Holy Ghost.'† The evidence which, in addition to what we have, would conduct us to a satisfactory decision on this point, lies beyond our reach. Inquiries numerously and perseveringly put, have brought nothing of the desired information in reply. If any of Mr. Burr's manuscripts survive him, they are not only safe-

* Wisner's Hist. Old South Church.

† "The practical result, every one sees, would be, that, if the innovation already made (i. e. the half-way covenant) were not abandoned, another would speedily be introduced. And such was the fact. Correct moral deportment, with a profession of correct doctrinal opinions, and a desire for regeneration, came to be regarded as the only qualification for admission to the communion. This innovation, though not as yet publicly advocated by any, there is conclusive proof, had become quite extensive in practice previously to 1679. The proof is the fact, that one of the measures earnestly recommended by the 'Reforming Synod' in 1679, was a return to the ancient strictness in admitting persons to the Lord's Supper." Wisner's Hist. O. S. Church.

ly hidden from hands that would destroy, but also concealed from eyes that would gladly examine them. They may not have contained the profoundest thoughts, or presented all the beauties and elegancies of diction; but, in exchange for a single one of them, many a volume of sparkling essays and many a tome of profound investigations would cheerfully be given. On the whole, we may, with considerable confidence, rest in the belief, that the Rev. Isaac Burr was a man of fair talents, respectable attainments in knowledge, and exemplary as a minister of the Gospel and the pastor of a church.

§ 4. Rev. Thaddeus Maccarty.

Before the consummation of Mr. Burr's dismission, a committee had been appointed by the town for the supply of the pulpit. In Dec. 1744, they were instructed 'to intercede with the reverend Elders of the late council to preach, each one day.' In March following, it was enjoined upon them 'to use their utmost endeavor that the town be not destitute of preaching on the Lord's day; to procure Mr. Townsend if to be had; if not, to consult with the Rev. President Holyoke, of Harvard College, Professor Appleton, and Dr. Wigglesworth, who to engage in a probationary way.' Two months afterwards, it was the expressed desire of the town, that two more gentlemen might be obtained for the same purpose, the Rev. President and Professors advising, and the vote was passed, 'that when they had been heard, the church should proceed to the choice from them and the three gentlemen who had already

preached, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Marsh, and Mr. Phillips, and that the town will hear no more persons before a choice is made.' Accordingly a 'choice was made,' in August following, of Mr. Nathaniel Gardner, a graduate of Harvard College in 1739, to be the third minister of Worcester. He was offered a salary of £60 in bills of credit, with a gratuity of £100; but declined the call.

The people were much distressed at the failure of their efforts to procure a settled pastor. Feb. 28, 1746, 'a day of fasting and prayer was observed, to implore the divine direction in the church's leading in the choice of a person to be ordained.' About this time, there seems to have been a growing sense of the importance of stability in ministerial relations, and of the evils resulting from running after preachers who, having no special charge of their own, went from place to place, unhealthfully exciting the minds of such as were not well established. In Sep. 1746, it was voted 'that the church will esteem it an offence, if any member thereof, shall hereafter countenance itinerant preachers.' At the same time a covenant, drawn up by Rev. Mr. Campbell of Oxford and Rev. Mr. Stone of Southborough, was adopted, and subsequently subscribed by fifty members of the church.*

Nearly two years had now elapsed since Mr. Burr ceased supplying the pulpit, and yet no one was settled in his place. Candidate after candidate, to the number of more than a dozen, had been heard; still the vacancy remained. In Oct. 1746, the committee received new instructions.—They were to request the Rev. Thaddeus Maccarty of Bos-

* Appendix, D.

ton, and the Rev. Jonathan Mayhew* of Martha's Vineyard, subsequently settled over the West church in Boston, to occupy the pulpit, each four Sabbaths. These gentlemen received the proposal with favor, and were both heard by the church and town of Worcester. Mr. Maccarty, having preached for the first time on the annual public thanksgiving, continued his labors here with great acceptance till the January following. The time designated for the choice of a minister, was the 19th of that month, 1747. The Sabbath preceding that important day, both of the candidates officiated, Mr. Mayhew in the forenoon and Mr. Maccarty in the afternoon. The latter seems to have made the most

* Rev. Jonathan Mayhew, D. D., the son of Rev. Experience Mayhew, was born on Martha's Vineyard, in 1720. He was a descendant in a direct line, from Thomas Mayhew, who emigrated from England to this country about 1632, resided a few years in Mystic and Watertown, removed to the Vineyard in 1641, 'and was long the patriarch and chief of the English settlement on the island.' The order of descent was, first, Thomas jr.; second, John; third, Experience; fourth, Jonathan. The family was remarkable for its moral worth, deep piety, and long continued exertions for the good of the Indians. Jonathan was a graduate of Harvard College, in 1744. In scholarship, he had hardly a superior in his class. In less than three years after his graduation, he was ordained over the West Church in Boston, as successor of the first minister, Mr. Hooper, who had become an Episcopalian. It was a curious coincidence, that he and Mr. Maccarty, who had been candidates together in Worcester, should be settled so near the same time—he in Boston, June 16, Mr Maccarty in Worcester, June 10, 1747. 'He was not only a popular and eloquent preacher and powerful writer, but a man of great learning. His career was short, but brilliant. He died at the age of forty-six. And yet he had written so much and so well, so appropriately and so powerfully, that he has been considered, by those acquainted with his works and qualified to judge of their merit, as entitled to a high rank in the first class of American authors.'* Those who are acquainted with the different styles of thought and preaching adopted by these once candidates for settlement here, may be interested in the inquiry, How would the moral and religious condition of this people differ from what it now is, provided the choice of the church and town in 1747 had fallen on Mayhew instead of Maccarty?

* Bradford's life of Mayhew, p. 12.

favorable impression; for, on the day of election, 44 to 2 of the church made choice of him as their pastor, and in town meeting, on the question of concurrence, there were but three dissentients.* His installation took place, June 10, 1747. The order of exercises on the occasion was as follows:—

Introductory Prayer, by Rev. John Campbell of Oxford.

Charge, by Rev. Mr. Williams of Weston.

Sermon, by Mr. Maccarty.

Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Cotton of Newton.

Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Appleton of Cambridge.

Benediction, by the Pastor.

The sermon was founded on the text in 1 Thess. 2: 13, "*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*"

Of the preacher's views and feelings in performing this service, an opinion may be formed from the following exordium.

"It was thought to be but a decent and proper part for

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* The following record of the vote will show that the town intended to act intelligently:

"Feb. 23d, 1746-7.

The Rev. Mr. Thaddeus Maccarty, having by Col. Chandler, communicated to the town the result of the Council relating to certain difficulties between him and the church of Christ in Kingston, together with what he offered them in order to a reconciliation—as also the votes of said church and of the town of Kingston respecting his dismission from his pastoral relation to them, as also a paper by him signed this day:

Whereupon the question was put whether the town would concur with the Church of Christ in their vote: it passed in the affirmative by a very great majority—but three persons dissenting." Town Records, vol. II.

me to act, upon this solemn occasion, to stand in the desk at this time, to be the mouth of God to this great assembly; whose candor I must humbly intreat, being sensible of my great insufficiency for the present performance. I should with great pleasure have sat at the feet of some of my reverend fathers, whose assistance in the affair I have craved, to be instructed by them at this time. But as the main design of a sermon at the introduction of one into the ministry, is with a special view to his instruction in the great and arduous business before him, so, let who will be the preacher, the same design is to be kept in view.

Accordingly, my main design is to preach to myself, to labor to affect my own soul, with the greatness and importance of the work I am now undertaking. But as the work of the ministry is equally weighty and important, as to every one who is engaged in it, and the same lessons are necessary for every one to hear and practice who is in the ministry, so I hope my *reverend fathers and brethren* here present will please to give a kind entertainment to, and seriously lay to heart the things I may offer, which equally concern them as well as myself. If their pure minds are stirred up by way of remembrance, it will be thankfully received by their unworthy monitor."

The vote of the town respecting Mr. Maccarty's salary was both peculiar and provident. The sum voted was £100 in money of the last emission, 'having special regard to the small value of bills of credit, but if the future circumstances of Mr. Maccarty's family should call for it, they would cheerfully and willingly make him such further addition as may be judged proper from time to time.' Until 1759, his salary did not exceed the value of £80. After

that period, twenty pounds annually were added, as a gratuity. In 1747, the town purchased a parsonage. It was on the common, south-east from the meeting-house. This was granted to Mr. Maccarty, in 1765, he releasing the town from all liabilities for repairs. As the war of the revolution approached, the minister of Worcester, with the great majority of his brethren throughout New England, espoused the side of freedom in opposition to tyranny. In his sermons and by his influence in other forms, he gave an impulse to that cause which was making its way to the hearts of three millions of freemen. But such a struggle could not be waged without serious embarrassments in all the relations of life, and great sufferings among all classes of the community. The people here, as elsewhere, participating in the excitement, felt the pressure of the time. In consideration of the burden upon his supporters, Mr. Maccarty, though he could ill afford to do it, relinquished a portion of his salary. The dependence of a large family on him for support, and the consciousness that a weight of years was already upon him, did not deter him from the self-denial that illustrated at once his patriotism and his consistency. During several of the last years of his life, he was incapacitated by feeble health from performing the duties of his station. In 1783, he preached for a short time; July 20, 1784, he went from his labor to his reward.

The Rev. Thaddeus Maccarty was a native of Boston. He was born in 1721. The son of a sea captain, he was destined to pursue the life of a mariner. In several voyages he sailed with his father; and, had it not been for a feeble constitution which unfitted him to endure the hard-

ships of ocean life, he would probably never have turned his thoughts to preparation for the Christian ministry. The Providence which foresees the end from the beginning—which ordains important service and designates the persons to perform it, indicated the course which this minister of Christ was to pursue, and so arranged his circumstances that, at an early age, he relinquished the employment of a sailor, and entered upon the quiet life of a student. His preparatory studies completed, he entered Harvard University, and, in 1739, received the honors of graduation from that institution. During the next three years he gave his attention to the study of theology. In the autumn of 1742, he was ordained over the church in Kingston, Ms.* His relation to that church was a happy one, until the excitement, produced by Whitefield's visit in that region in the early part of 1745. Some of his people were greatly disturbed at the strange effects which followed that prince of revival preachers wherever he went; and, hearing that he was, on invitation of their pastor, to preach a 'preparatory' lecture in Kingston, became so much excited, that they determined to prevent it by covering the windows and nailing the doors of the meeting-house. Mr. Maccarty feeling that he had a right to judge and act for himself, could not be indifferent to such a demonstration of rashness and injustice to him, on the part of his people. He was indeed friendly to Mr. Whitefield, as appears from a letter of his

* In 1743, Sept. 3d, he was married to Miss Mary Gatcomb, daughter of Francis Gatcomb, an emigrant from Wales. Mr. Gatcomb became a wealthy merchant in Boston, and died there, July 20, 1744, at the age of 51. Mr. Maccarty and his wife lived together more than 40 years, until Dec. 1783, when she was removed by death, less than a year before her husband. They had fifteen children, eight of whom died in infancy.

written at Kingston, March 4, 1745, from which the following is an extract: "I can't but think *Mr. Whitefield* is a *man eminent for his piety*, and that he has *done vast service* to the *kingdom of* CHRIST in *this land* more especially; and that *if ministers and people would let him have a free course through the land, he would be instrumental of bringing about a very glorious reformation.* And no one that is in such a thought, can help being *grieved*, to think he meets with *such opposition* among *ministers and people.*" But why should his church presume to dictate what their pastor should, and what he should not do? As though he had no control of his own pulpit and it were not his prerogative to decide whom to invite to occupy it, they presumed, though the report which caused their zeal to outrun their discretion was false, to debar his entrance into that house where he had been ordained as their spiritual guide and overseer. Instead of being learners, they assumed to teach. Instead of 'obeying him that had the rule over them in the Lord,' they hastily, if not arrogantly, assumed the position of dictators. Thus denied his rights as a minister and outraged in his feelings as a man, Mr. Maccarty forthwith asked to be dismissed from his people. His request having been submitted to a council, they advised, conditionally, that his pastoral relation should be dissolved. On the 3d of Nov. 1745, precisely three years from the date of his settlement, he preached his farewell sermon. In the words of the Apostle Paul, Acts 20: 31, he found a text admirably suited to his purpose. "*Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of* THREE YEARS, *I ceased not to warn every one night and day, with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his*

grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." The sermon was published. More than half a century afterwards, a new edition of it was issued from a Boston press. It is plain and searching. It speaks wholesome truths in a manner which cannot easily be misapprehended. Still, it breathes a spirit of kindness, and evinces an ardent desire, on the part of the minister who was leaving them, to promote the spiritual interests of the people who had enjoyed the first fruits of his labor. A single extract may not here be out of place. "In all probability I shall no more preach the Gospel to you; yet I hope you will have it preached to you in a much better manner; in the power and purity of it; and have it become the power of God to your salvation.—It may be I shall never see you all again in this world. However, I find in myself a disposition to wish every one's welfare in all regards, temporal and spiritual.

"And as to whatever has occurred of a disagreeable nature to me, (and some things have occurred of this sort,) I think I can say truly, I indulge not a malicious, revengeful spirit, towards any; but contrariwise, and wish all the blessings of heaven may plentifully descend upon you, and an increase of all the blessings of God's footstool."

Leaving his people with such kindly feelings and ever cherishing for them a sincere and manly cordiality, he commanded in return their respectful and affectionate remembrance. 'He and they for many years afterwards, expressed a high regard for each other.'*

Installed in Worcester, 1747, Mr. Maccarty labored here with diligence and success, thirty-seven years. Liv-

* MSS. of Rev. Z. Willis, successor of Mr. M. in Kingston.

ing in ‘ troublous times,’ he had his full share of trials; but under them all he honored the ministry, and his ministry honored him. In seasons of peril, he was calm and steadfast; and though darkness was above and around him, he was looking ‘ with the patience of hope’ for light. No pressure of evil could blind him to the presence of good; and while he preached on days of public fasting and prayer, he was sure to remind his people that they had much to be grateful for. The last years of his life brought with them many sorrows. Sickness disabled him so that he could not occupy that pulpit, for the supply of which he was responsible; with limited means of support at the best, the emergency of disease brought not the willing offerings he could have wished from those he had so long and so faithfully served; and it is no wonder that, at times, mental lassitude and sadness of spirit were superadded to the pains of body.— Still, habitually, hope was in the ascendant; and, with every reäction of his energies, he renewed his efforts for the souls that were precious to him.

By his long and faithful service he greatly endeared himself to the people of his charge; and though he may have thought at times, that their bearing towards him was not characterized by the delicate thoughtfulness and liberal devising he could have desired, yet they have left tangible evidence to their posterity that he had a place in their warmest affections and profoundest regards. Fathers have told their sons, and the sons have told us, that he was greatly respected while he lived, and deeply lamented when he died. His epitaph is also with us, and the graven words are an eloquent memorial of him who deserved, and of them who erected this monument to his memory.

"BENEATH THIS STONE ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF THE REV. THADDEUS MACCARTY, FOR THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN WORCESTER. THROUGH THE COURSE OF HIS MINISTRY, HE UNIFORMLY EXHIBITED AN EXAMPLE OF THE PEACEABLE AND AMIABLE VIRTUES OF CHRISTIANITY. UNDER A SLOW AND PAINFUL DECLINE, HE DISCOVERED AN ARDENT LOVE TO HIS MASTER, BY A CHEERFUL ATTENTION TO HIS SERVICE, AND AT THE APPROACH OF DEATH, HE PATIENTLY SUBMITTED, IN THE FULL HOPE OF A GLORIOUS RESURRECTION FROM THE GRAVE. IN TESTIMONY OF HIS FIDELITY, THE PEOPLE OF HIS CHARGE ERECT THIS MONUMENT. OBIIT, JULY 10, 1784, ÆTATIS 63."

In personal appearance, the subject of this sketch 'was a man tall of stature, slender of habit, with a black, penetrating eye.' The aspect of the external man was favorable to his effectiveness as a public speaker. His address was characterized by impressiveness. The tones of his voice were distinct; but were rather powerful than melodious. 'As a public preacher, he was solemn, loud, searching and rousing.'*

In disposition, he was kind and amiable. He coveted not strife; but would rather suffer wrong than do wrong. Yet, he was not the man to sacrifice right even for the sake of peace, or to put his conscience in the keeping of policy. To the kindly feelings and social aptitudes that made him a valued friend and obliging neighbor,† he added the love of truth and devotion to God which grace the Christian and adorn the soul for her home in the skies. Exemplary in all

* MSS. of Rev. Z. Willis.

† It has been intimated that Mr. Maccarty was rough and uncouth in his manners, and not very genial in temperament. The author has neither seen nor heard anything, however, which induces him at all to modify the statement in the text.

his private and social relations, he felt, as he preached, the necessity of personal holiness; and, while he taught others that there is no hope of a sinner's acceptance with God except through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, he cordially received Him as Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption for his own soul. Believing that 'the converted is generally the converting ministry,' he would not attempt to preach to others, without having authenticated in his own experience the truths which he proclaimed to them. He became a minister because he had the spirit of a Christian. That always involves a desire to be in the highest degree useful. A more valuable encomium could hardly have been passed upon him, than that 'he uniformly exhibited an example of the peaceable and amiable virtues of Christianity.' If 'the Christian is the highest style of man,' then was he among the most excellent of the earth. It should be added to his praise, that he not only cultivated the active virtues while health and vigor were continued to him; but, when disease impaired his strength and paralyzed his energies, he exhibited the graces of resignation and patience. Without a murmur he marked the slow decline of his powers; calmly he endured the ministry of personal suffering; and eventually passed away in the assured hope of a glorious resurrection.

But the design of this work leads us to consider him more particularly as a preacher of the Gospel. With good natural powers and favorable opportunities for cultivating them, with the influence of a religious experience superadded to a genial temper and an amiable disposition, he was prepared to commence the Christian ministry with promise of success, and to find a growing interest in it at every

stage of its progress. The habits of study which he had acquired in the school and the university, he carried with him into the life-work for which he had been preparing.—His conception of the magnitude and responsibility of his office did not allow him to omit reading, thought and study. He taught 'that the work of the ministry ought to be entered upon with great caution and solemnity; that this institution of Christ may be abused and defiled, as well as any others; that it is grossly so, when the ignorant, the vicious and immoral rush into the ministry; that many have taken upon them the office in a rude and disorderly manner, and have been so far from being capable of instructing others in the things of our holy religion, that they had need that one teach them which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and that persons should see to it, that they have some competent furniture for this great and arduous work, and that they are understanding in the principles of Christianity.' With such sentiments, he commenced his ministry in Worcester; and his own habitual example proved that he uttered them not for rhetorical effect, but from genuine conviction. Diligent as a student, his sermons were full of important thoughts, well arranged. He could not turn his people off with productions merely extempore, whether written or unwritten. Cultivating a deep reverence for the Scriptures and making the truths of revelation themes of daily contemplation, his efforts in the pulpit were eminently biblical*—imbued with

* A single extract from the Diary of Pres. John Adams may not be out of place here. "May 23d, 1756. Sunday. Heard Mr. Maccarty. He is particularly fond of the following expressions: 'carnal, ungodly persons; sensuality and voluptuousness; walking with God, unregeneracy, rebellion against God; believers; all things come alike to all; there is one event to

the spirit and enriched with the language of the Bible. Attaching great importance to the essential truths of the Gospel, his discourses, while earnestly practical, had a strong ground-work of doctrine. His exhortations were the more impressive, on account of previous reasonings on 'righteousness, temperance and a judgment to come.' Truth in the concrete was the more cordially welcomed or more heartily opposed, because truth in the abstract had been so clearly apprehended by the intellect.

Nor were Mr. Maccarty's sermons well studied, skillfully arranged, scriptural, and thoroughly doctrinal only; they were pervaded with the spirit of a fervent piety. He taught publicly that ministers 'should see to it that they have truly good and noble aims and motives, even the advancement of the glory and honor of God and Christ, and the promoting of the salvation of their own souls, and the souls of them that hear them; that they should look off from themselves to the Holy Spirit, that He would accompany their counsels, their preaching, their example, and make them effectual to the conversion of sinners and the building up of saints in faith and holiness; and that they should be careful to live agreeably to that word which they preach to others.' He was well aware that if he would speak to the hearts of others, he must speak from his own heart; that the more thoroughly his own spirit was imbued with the truth as it is in Jesus, the more likely would he be to move

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the righteous and to the wicked; shut out of the presence of God; solid, substantial, and permanent joys springing up in the soul; the shines of God's countenance.'" See Works of President John Adams, by his Grandson, Vol. II.

"Mr. Maccarty, though a Calvinist, was not a bigot."—Extract from a letter of Pres. A. to Dr. Bancroft.

and bless others. Hence his sermons came from the head, indeed, but they went *through the heart* to his people.

Eight of Mr. Maccarty's discourses have been printed.* They were preached on important occasions, and must have produced considerable impression at the time of their delivery. A perusal of them at this day has elements of interest both for the student of ecclesiastical history and the general reader. They are carefully thought out, and pervaded with an excellent spirit.— Characterized by sound sense, and conveying important instruction in an impressive manner, they are creditable alike to the head and the heart of the writer. But few of his sermons in manuscript survive him. It was his wish that they should be destroyed at his decease. Among them was one of an historical character, the destruction of which is deeply regretted. The following notice of its contents was entered by himself on the records of the church:

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* They are comprehended in the following list. 1. Farewell sermon, preached at Kingston, Nov. 3, 1745, Boston, 1804. 2. The success of the preached gospel matter to faithful ministers of continual thankfulness to God; sermon at the author's installation to the pastoral office at Worcester, June 10, 1747. 3. The advice of Joab to the host of Israel going forth to war, considered and urged; in two discourses delivered in Worcester, April 5, 1759, being the day of the annual fast, and the day preceding the general muster of the militia throughout the province for the enlisting soldiers for the intended expedition against Canada. 4. The power and grace of Christ displayed to a dying malefactor: sermon, Oct. 20, 1768, the day of the execution of Arthur, a negro, at Worcester. 5. The most heinous sinners capable of the saving blessings of the Gospel: sermon, Oct. 25, 1770, on the execution of William Linsey for burglary, at Worcester. 6. Praise to God, a duty of continual obligation: sermon, Nov. 23, 1775, public thanksgiving. 7. The guilt of innocent blood put away: sermon, July 2, 1778, on the execution of Buchanan, Brooks, Ross, and Mrs. Spooner, for murder at Worcester. 8. Reformation of manners necessary to conciliate the divine favor: sermon preached at Worcester, on occasion of a special fast, July 14, 1774.

'Thursday, Dec. 8, 1763. This day, being the public thanksgiving throughout the province, and the day also of this congregation's assembling in their new meeting-house,* which began to be erected on June 21st preceding, exactly 16 years from the time of my installment to the pastoral office, I preached a sermon from 1 Chr. xxix. 16, 17, in which some brief account was given of the original settlement of this town, the gathering of this church, its pastors, admissions, baptisms, &c., and some proper notice taken of the solemnity of thanksgiving.'

From the few manuscripts to which access can be now had, there is but little room for choice in the selections to be made for this work. It is believed that the following sermon, besides serving as a specimen of the mode of think-

* "In 1763, the *Old South Meeting-house*, was built, 70 feet long, 55 feet wide with 28 feet posts, at the expense of £1542. There were 61 square pews on the lower floor. That esteemed the best, on the west side of the pulpit, and directly under it, valued at £9, was assigned to Hon. John Chandler, as an acknowledgment of his donation of £40 towards erecting the church. The highest price paid for pews was £9, the lowest £4, 10s. In front of the pulpit, were two long pews, one for the deacons, the other for aged persons; and along the head of the central aisle, were seven slips, for the free seats of men and women, placed on opposite sides. There were three porches, at the south, east, and west entrances, and a tower on the north, surmounted by a spire, 130 feet high."

The bell placed in this steeple, in 1802, weighing 1975 pounds, bore this inscription:

"The living to the church I call,
And to the grave I summon all."

Lincoln's History, p. 346.

The meeting-house has been considerably enlarged since its erection, is now 90 feet long and 55 feet wide, having a Lecture Room at the south end. The square pews have been exchanged for those of a more modern construction, the pulpit is no longer at the side, but at the north end of the house, while opposite to it stands one of Appleton's finest organs, the cost of which was about $3500.

ing and style of writing of Mr. Maccarty, contains thoughts of general and permanent interest. The writing of it was begun, Nov. 17, and completed Nov. 20, 1779. It was divided into two parts, and preached, 'Lord's day, Nov. 21, 1779—Sacrament.' It is numbered 455 on the manuscript; but this is not to be taken as the number of all the sermons he had written up to that period; for, a sermon of his written nearly nineteen years before, is numbered 844. Another, dated Sept. 10, 1765, bears the number 70. It is probable, therefore, that he had more than one series of sermons; and that the one before us was the 455th of the second thousand. Taking into view the fact that these discourses appear all to have been written out with great care, that, if they do not rise to the first rank of sermons, they would by general consent be placed not below the line of mediocrity,* they give us an idea of his diligence as a student and of his devotion to his one great calling. Without further remarks by way of introduction, the discourse on 'Spiritual Freedom' is herewith submitted to the reader's inspection. He may call it one sermon divided into two parts, or two sermons on one and the same subject.

* "After preaching a convention sermon, a contemporary clergyman remarked, that he had never heard him preach either a very low, or a very brilliant discourse.—Lincoln's Hist. p. 176.

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM:

TWO

SERMONS DELIVERED IN WORCESTER,

LORD'S DAY, NOV. 21, 1779;

BY THE

REV. THADDEUS MACCARTY, M. A.

FIRST SERMON.

JOHN 8: 36. *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

OUR Lord is here addressing certain Jews, who it is said (v. 31) "believed on him." They had, in opposition to the generality of their nation and countrymen, admitted the proofs and evidences that had been exhibited to them that Jesus was the true Messiah; and they embraced and trusted in him accordingly. He puts them upon giving the evidence of their faith by their adhering to his word, attending diligently to his doctrine, as the great Prophet, and conducting agreeable to his precepts, as their King and Lord. He then takes occasion to mention a very great privilege which belonged to them, as it does to all the real disciples of Christ. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Some carnal Jews that stood by, took offence at this saying, claiming relation to Abraham, and that their state had always been a state of freedom. This was far from being true. For the seed of Abraham had been in bondage to the Egyptians. They had oft been so to the neighbor nations in the time of the Judges. They had been seventy years captives in Babylon, and (as it is observed) were at this time tributaries to the Romans, and though not in a personal, yet in a national bondage to them, and groaning to be made free. "Thus (as one observes) they would expose Christ to the ill-will both of the Jews, who were very jealous for the honor of their liberty, and of the Romans, who would not be thought to enslave the nations they conquered."

But the freedom that Christ is speaking of (and they might have so understood him, had they not been under the power of the most obstinate prejudice) the freedom, I say, that he was speaking of, was a spiritual freedom, effected by the force and energy of truth brought home to the heart—a freedom from sin, as intimated in the next verse—"Whoso committeth sin is the servant of sin," says Christ in reply. In this respect, at least, they were in a state of bondage. Then he shews them the way of deliverance from this state of bondage, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed;" ye shall be really and truly free.

Christ (as I observed at first) addresses certain Jews that truly believed on him, and so were in a state of freedom. And accordingly, we shall discourse upon this privilege which belongs to all true believers in Christianity:

They are by Him brought into a state of true freedom—true liberty.

Not, I would observe, into a state of libertinism. They are still under the law; not the ceremonial, but the moral law—which law is fully adopted into His own institution, most powerfully urged, and cannot be dispensed with. It was not in His design in His remedial undertaking to abrogate it, but to establish it. Otherwise He would be the minister of sin, and His death would be in vain. Those whom Christ is speaking to He exhorts to continue in His word, as the proof of their discipleship and of being in a state of spiritual freedom. "Had Christ (says one) freed us from obedience, such a liberty had been to our loss. The law sends us to Christ to be justified, and Christ sends us to the law to be regulated."

I would further say, that this spiritual freedom by Christ is consistent with a state of warfare. The Christian life is so spoken of, and that on account of the enemies wherewith Christians are surrounded. Satan is their grand enemy, as he was Christ's; and he shoots his fiery darts at them, and they feel the pain and smart occasioned thereby.

Nor are believers, who are brought into a state of spiritual freedom, totally freed from the motions of indwelling sin. The apostle Paul found the working of this, as we may see in the 7th to the Romans; and he groans to be delivered from it, as the hindrance of his spiritual growth, and the disturber of his peace and consolation by Christ. And this is the common case with Christians.

I would further say, that this spiritual freedom is consistent with being in a state of much outward trouble and afflictions. They (Christians) are called to these, in com-

mon with others. Job was a remarkable instance of suffering, in the Old Testament, the apostle Paul in the New; and other instances might be mentioned. Herein they were but conformed to their great head and master, Christ, who was afflicted and oppressed, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. All the children of God (says one) are made free; yet what son is there, whom the father chasteneth not? (Heb. 12 : 8.) Exemption from affliction is so far from being the mark of a freeman, that the apostle there makes it the mark of a slave—yea, to be 'bastards and not sons.' To be freed from affliction would be no benefit to believers, who receive so many benefits by affliction.

Lastly, I would say, that believers, notwithstanding their freedom by Christ, yet are not exempt from the stroke of death, any more than others. Their bodies are alike constituted as others, frail and feeble, having in them the seeds of corruption and mortality, tending to a dissolution, and sooner or later drop into the dust. Christ indeed has taken away the sting of death from them, so that it is a blessing to them rather than a curse. But they must meet with it. The grave is their house, and therein they must lie, till the trump of God shall awake them at the last day, when this mortal shall put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'

Having observed these things, I go on to say, that the spiritual freedom which believers enjoy by Jesus Christ is, in the first place, a freedom from many sad evils and miseries. Thus it is a freedom from the rigor of the law, and also from the curse of it. The law originally required

perfect obedience. It denounced a curse upon disobedience, and this must have been inflicted but for the interposition of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, as the apostle speaks, was made a curse for us. Since the apostacy, no mere man has been able to keep the law perfectly. But under the gracious constitution by Jesus Christ, sincerity is accepted. Every transgression does not bring under condemnation. "There is (says the apostle) no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk"—whose habitual walk, however attended with imperfections, "is after the Spirit and not after the flesh." "O blessed freedom, (says one) when duty becomes delight, and failings hinder not acceptance."

Again: true believers in Christ are in a state of spiritual freedom, in respect of the guilt of sin, or their being free therefrom. In their unrenewed state, they were in a state of guilt. The guilt of all their sins lay upon them; and considering the nature and number of them, it amounted to a vast load. This they were daily adding to, as all carnal persons are, for in many things they all daily offend. But believers are brought into a state of pardon by Christ—obtain redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin. They are justified from all things. They were deeply in arrears to the justice of God. But by the suretyship of Christ, the debt is cancelled, and they stand acquitted before him. What a blessed freedom is this!

It may be added, that believers are in a state of spiritual freedom, as they are free from the dominion and power of sin. Heretofore sin reigned in their mortal bodies, so that they obeyed it in the lusts thereof. But now that that the apostle speaks, which is characteristic of the real members

and disciples of Christ, is true as to them: "They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." They are now, as he speaks to the Christians at Rome, "made free from sin"—free from its power and dominion. And, of course, they are free from the power and tyranny of Satan, who is said to rule in the hearts of the children of disobedience. 'They are (as the apostle speaks) translated out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of Christ.' (Colos. 1: 13.) Satan had the possession of them, as a man of his own goods, but Christ dispossesseth the strong man armed, alters the property, and recovers them out of his hand. The blood of Christ with which they are redeemed, is a strong barrier against his usurped power and dominion. When the prisoner hath a legal discharge, he that held him in durance hath no further power over him. "Forasmuch (says the apostle) then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself took part of the same, that through death, He might deliver him that had the power of death, that is the devil." He is not wholly destroyed, for he has a kingdom in the world, and many are his willing slaves and captives. But he is so far destroyed, that he cannot prevail against Christ, and his power is lost over his members whom He has rescued out of his hands.

Thus believers are in a state of spiritual freedom. And they find a freedom *in* the service of God. This was once irksome and burdensome to them—holy duties and services they engaged in with reluctancy. They could not be easy and quiet in the neglect of them; but [they had] no freedom and readiness in the performance of them. [They were] a disagreeable task; and in an attendance upon

them, they were, as it is said of Doeg, *detained before the Lord.* But being now spiritualized in the temper of their minds, they are quite different as to their bent and tendency. Now they find a freedom to duty, and particularly to engage in holy exercises—a freedom and readiness to wait upon God's throne of grace, to converse with Him by prayer, to pour out their hearts before Him in confessions, in supplications, intercessions and praises,—a freedom and readiness they find to engage in all sacred exercises, secret, private and public. That which was once burdensome to them, is now delightful to them, what they are in their element in.

And not only have they this freedom in all pious and holy exercises which respect God, but in an observance of all his laws and commandments in general. None of them are grievous to them, as they once were. They are truly satisfied in respect of the reasonableness and excellency of them, heartily approve of them, and have a readiness to keep them. "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." "All that the Lord our God commandeth, that will we do and be obedient," and carefully avoid every thing of a contrary nature and tendency. This is their unfeigned language. This is the spirit of religious freedom and liberty. Such was the spirit that actuated the pious David. Hence he speaks, "I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts." (Ps. 119 : 45.) "I desire to know and do my duty, and consult thy word accordingly. I not only consent to thy precepts, but take complacency in them as good for me." "I will walk at liberty;" denoting his freedom and easiness in his duty—at liberty from that which is evil, not hampered with my own corruptions, free to that which is good, doing

it not by constraint, but willingly. That state of spiritual freedom which believers are brought into by Christ, is as wheels to their obedience. "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." Agreeable whereto is that of the apostle to the Romans: "Being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness." Being delivered from the bondage of corruption, and [brought] to bow to the divine authority and government, they were now powerfully prompted to serve God in holiness and righteousness. This is true freedom, and of the most excellent kind.

I will just add, that this freedom by Christ, is a most comfortable freedom. The apostle comforts Christians of the lowest rank, even those that are servants of men, with this consideration: "He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman." (1 Cor. 7: 22.) "Let not (as one comments upon it), let not the meanness of your outward condition, which is a state of subjection and dependence, a state of poverty and contempt, at all trouble you; you are the Lord's freeman, of precious account in His eyes."

In a word, this is a perpetual freedom. Satan shall never be able to recover the servants of Christ, and bring them again under his yoke. They are in safe and powerful hands, in His hands who is greater than all. He may vex and trouble them, but he shan't subject them any more.—Sin shall no more have dominion over them. They shall be preserved to God's heavenly kingdom, where they will be fully invested in all the honors, privileges and liberties of the children of God.

The end of the first Sermon.

SECOND SERMON.

John 8 : 36.

We have discoursed something concerning that spiritual freedom by Christ Jesus, which belongs to all true believers in him. I shall at this time offer some reflections upon what has been said upon this subject.

In the first place, it may well be thought that Christians who are sensible that they are in such a state of freedom and liberty, should find an exceeding joy in their souls. Those that have been in a state of captivity and bondage to men, can't but be glad and joyful, upon being emancipated, and restored to their liberty. For they now feel and enjoy themselves as men, of the noble, superior class of beings they belong to. We may well suppose that the Israelites, upon their going forth from Egypt, where they had been long held under the most cruel bondage and slavery, felt an exceeding joy. And thus it was long after, with the redeemed captives from Babylon. Thus the Psalmist represents it: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream: Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing." Civil liberty is a great blessing. Distress follows upon the loss of it; but the restoration of it inspires with joy. But spiritual liberty is in its nature more glorious and excellent than civil. To enjoy both together is most happy and joyous. As to the inferior creatures, they are fond of liberty. "The very birds of the air (as one observes) had rather be at liberty in the woods, though lean and hungry, than in a golden cage, with the richest fare."

But what cause now have believers to rejoice, in that the Son has made them free, and they are free indeed? When they were roused up and brought to a sense and sight of their deplorable condition, being in bondage to corruption under the tyranny of Satan, how did they pant and long to be delivered from this miserable state? And when the power of sin and Satan was broken, and they brought into the liberty of the sons of God, is it to be wondered at that their hearts should overflow with joy and gladness? Verily, never any slaves delivered from their chains and dungeons and their most abject and painful tasks, may be supposed to experience a greater, no, nor an equal joy with that of those who are redeemed from their miserable bondage to sin and Satan. This has been painful and distressing in itself, and the more so as it led to irrecoverable misery, to become prisoners to divine justice with the devil and his angels. Whatever occasions Christians may have for sorrow and distress on worldly accounts, yet they have at the same time occasion for an exceeding joy for that state of freedom and liberty, they are brought into by Christ Jesus. "Rejoice, then, in the Lord, O ye righteous; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King," that they are brought into subjection to Him, which is the noblest and most exalted liberty and freedom. His yoke is easy, sweet and pleasant.

Secondly. What cause have believers to bless God for Christ Jesus, through whom it is that they are brought into a state of spiritual liberty and freedom? Satan in his first attack upon mankind meant to enslave them, and to bring them into an irrecoverable subjection to his usurped empire. And this has been his aim all along, in all his subtle devices,

solicitations and temptations. It would gratify his malignant spirit to have the whole human race in a miserable subjection to him, that he might have them all with him at last in his place of torment, to blaspheme the God of heaven because of their plagues. It is said that at present he rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience. He has slaves and vassals innumerable, and multitudes are led captive by him at his will. His malicious aims and designs must have been fully accomplished in the subjection of the whole human race, and in their consequent everlasting perdition, had it not been that God, who is rich in mercy, sent His Son into the world, to redeem man from the power of sin and Satan, and restore them to a state of freedom. The apostle makes a grateful mention of this in "giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood." (Colos. 1: 12—14.) This blood was the purchase of their redemption and procures the application of it. This application is made to all true believers in Christ Jesus; whereupon they are delivered from their state of bondage and slavery, and become free indeed, rescued out of the hands of their spiritual enemies—Satan the chief, and brought to possess the glorious liberties of the children of God.

What a rich, unspeakable blessing was Christ to the world, which Satan had seduced into a revolt and apostacy from God. What an effectual method was this to counterwork him in his designs. Those who have by Him been delivered from their bondage and slavery, have everlasting

reason to bless God for His mercy herein, especially, as they may entertain a hope of at length becoming citizens of the Jerusalem that is above, that is free—a freedom from all enemies, and a freedom to serve, praise and glorify God in the purest and very best manner. They will serve him day and night in His temple, and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

Thirdly. Christians should take heed and beware of every thing that tends towards apostacy. Apostacy from Christ, His doctrine, ways and worship, is very unreasonable and very inexcusable. It is to be like the Israelites, whom God had redeemed from their bondage with a high hand and with an outstretched arm, who were for appointing themselves a captain to conduct them back to Egypt, to have their necks again put under the iron yoke. This was a strange disposition indeed. And so we should esteem it, if a prisoner who had long been confined in a dungeon and loaded with chains, after he had been brought forth and discharged, and enjoyed the common liberties of a citizen, should discover a disposition to return to the forlorn condition he had been in, and forego all the sweets and delights of a state of liberty and freedom. Those that apostatize from Christ, go back to their inglorious and worse than Egyptian bondage.

"O Christian! (says a pious writer) if ever God gave thee a sight and a sense of the misery and danger of thy natural state, if ever thou hast felt the pangs and throes of a laboring and a distressed conscience, and after all this, tasted the unspeakable sweetness of the peace that is in Christ, thou wilt rather choose to die ten thousand deaths, than to forsake Christ and go back again into that sad condition."

Apostacy is a sin highly dishonorary and displeasing to God. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." It is exceedingly difficult to regain that state of liberty and freedom they have been in, and sooner or later they must feel great anguish of heart. Christians, therefore, should watch and pray, and have their eye continually to their great Lord and glorious head of influences, that so they may be kept from falling, and be kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto salvation.

Fourthly. We may hence see, wherefore it is that Satan, the enemy of God and of all righteousness, bends his force to oppose the Gospel of Christ. It is by this Gospel, instrumentally, that those who have been under his power and dominion, have been made free. "Ye shall know the truth, (referring to his Gospel in general, says Christ) and the truth shall make you free." Nothing is more vexatious to that foul, infernal fiend, than to lose any of his vassals and captives. For it breaks in upon his hellish schemes. For his main aim is that God be dishonored, that the undertaking of Christ be frustrated, and that the souls of men, who have been in such esteem with God that He has parted with his own Son from his bosom, that by His death and sacrifice they might be redeemed and saved, should after all sink into the eternal gulf of wo and misery, in which he shall be confined to all eternity. Therefore it is that he opposes the plan of redemption by Christ. He has instigated tyrants and persecutors to suppress the Gospel of the blessed God, to imprison, silence and banish His faithful ambassadors. For he would fain, if possible, prevent any from being translated out of his miserable kingdom into the kingdom of [God's] dear Son — being delivered from their

vassalage to him, and [introduced] into the glorious liberty of the children of God. It is a pity that any, who hear the joyful sound of the Gospel, proclaiming liberty to the captives, should ever directly or indirectly symbolize with that foul spirit in their opposition to the Gospel, or those that publish its glad tidings. And yet so it sometimes is.

"Satan," says one, "is a great and jealous prince; he will never endure to have liberty proclaimed by the ministers of Christ within his dominions": and, indeed, what is it less, when the gospel is preached in power, but as it were by beat of drum and sound of trumpet to proclaim liberty, spiritual liberty, sweet and everlasting liberty, to every soul that is made sensible of the bondage of corruption and cruel servitude of Satan, and will now come over to Christ Jesus? And, oh, what numbers and multitudes of prisoners have broken loose from Satan, at one proclamation of Christ! (Acts 2: 41.) But Satan owes them a spite for this, and will be sure to pay them, if ever they come within his reach; and he can generally find tools and instruments enough to do the business.

Fifthly. Christians should be careful to maintain their spiritual liberty in the fullest manner. In matters of conscience and religion they should not give place by subjection to any, however imperious and lordly, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel may remain with them. They are bought with a price, and are the Lord's forever. "Be ye not, therefore, (as the Apostle exhorts) the servants of men." Christ is head and Lord of His people. It is His sole prerogative to prescribe rules and orders for them; and this He has sufficiently done in His holy Gospel. Those are daring and assuming indeed who pretend to have

dominion over their faith, and to mark out for them a plan different from that which their Master has done. "One man," says an author, "is no rule to another, but the word of Christ a rule to all: follow not the holiest of men one step further than they follow Christ." Christians, agreeable to their rank and dignity, should stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free.

Lastly. How much should it be the care and endeavor of all who have remained alienated from God and Christ, that they be brought into a state of freedom and liberty. Men in general are loth to give up their civil rights and liberties, and to be brought into a state of subjection and bondage. What was it that gave rise to the grand contest between Great Britain and America but this? As to the latter, this was the object, at least at the first setting out. To assert and maintain their liberties, what an expense has there been of blood and treasure? It would be well, if there was an equal zeal, and as strenuous endeavors respecting spiritual freedom and liberty by Christ Jesus. But multitudes to whom this liberty is proclaimed, are quite indifferent about it, yea in no concern to obtain it. Were enemies to overpower and subjugate them, and they were to hold their lives and properties at their sovereign will and pleasure, in what a miserable, unhappy condition would they think themselves; and how would they groan to be delivered from it; and how earnest and vehement would be their exertions in the case? Strange that men should have such a quick sense of their infelicity in this regard, and that they should be so totally careless and unconcerned as to their spiritual liberty — the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

It is certainly the case with all that remain alienated from God and Christ, let them be who they will or what they will in outward and civil respects, that they are in a state of slavery and bondage, and of the worst kind. They are slaves to their lusts. These tyrannize over them, and they are overcome by them. They are, (as the Apostle speaks) "servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." Thus it is with them, though they may fancy themselves in a state of liberty, or imagine they shall be so. For the Apostle says that they are in this bondage while they promise themselves liberty. Such as are in a state of vassalage to Satan, the usurping God of this world, are at his beck, comply with his temptations, are drudging in his interests, and in promoting his miserable kingdom, in opposition to the kingdom of the Son of God. And what must be the final issue, but their having their portion with their accursed master, not only shut out from the blissful presence of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, but thrust down into the hideous regions of darkness, death, and everlasting despair? What a miserable portion will this be — what dreadful wages for their work and labor: but nothing but what they have truly merited.

Think of this matter agreeable to the importance of it, all ye that have been and still remain in this miserable servitude; and may you have an earnest love excited in you, and your endeavors be proportionably vigorous, that you may be delivered from it, — translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of the Son of God. His great errand into the world was, that men might be free indeed. In His Gospel he proclaims liberty to the captives. The

Gospel is a blessed jubilee, proclaiming release to servants, that they go out free, enjoy liberty of the noblest and most excellent kind, such as shall prepare the way for an admission to the Jerusalem that is above, and put into the possession of all the high honors, privileges, and felicities thereof. Wherefore, let all such come to the blessed Jesus, bow to Him as their King and Saviour, take upon them His yoke which is easy and His burden which is light. Let them enlist under His banner, and employ themselves in His service. And this will be to be free indeed.

The reader will be interested in the following extracts from a discourse preached by Mr. Maccarty, July 14th, 1774. It may be premised that "in 1765, after the passage of the 'stamp act,' the person appointed distributor of stamps, was compelled by threats of violence, to decline the acceptance of the office, and the house of the lieutenant-governor was destroyed by a mob. A large military and naval force was stationed at Boston, for the purpose of overawing the people. On the evening of March 5, 1770, a sergeant's guard fired upon a crowd of people, who were surrounding them and pelting them with snowballs, and killed five men. Dec. 16th, 1773, on the arrival of three ships loaded with tea, after various unsuccessful attempts had been made by public meetings of the citizens, to prevent its being landed and sold, in violation of the non-importation resolves of the people, a number of men disguised as Indians, went on board the ships, and threw all the tea overboard. In the following spring, the port of Boston was

closed by an act of Parliament (Boston port-bill,) and the landing and shipping of goods within the harbor was ordered to be discontinued. The session of the General Court was removed to Salem, and additional bodies of troops and a military governor were ordered to Boston."* In July of that year, a special fast was observed in many of the towns of Massachusetts, 'on account of the public difficulties of the present day.' The following account of the appointment of the day is given by Mr. Maccarty, in a note to his discourse: "The observation of this day was not, as usual, by a proclamation from the civil authority. It appears that the late House of Representatives applied to his Excellency, Governor Gage, that a public fast might be appointed. But as his Excellency was not pleased to comply with said motion, it was voted in the House, that the Representatives upon their return home, apply to their respective parish ministers that such a day might be observed. Having been applied to accordingly, and finding, upon laying it before the congregation in this place — which I thought but a just respect to them, notwithstanding said application — that it was very generally desired, the day was observed. And I have the pleasure to declare that there was not the least disorder upon said day. Many respectable persons who did not see so clearly into the propriety of it, yet being unwilling to give offence to their neighbors and brethren, laid aside all their secular concerns, and, with but few exceptions, attended the public exercises. And I would further declare, that so far as I had opportunity to observe among my people, the principle that seemed to govern them was, not an opposition to government, but a

*Am Encyc. Article, Boston.

sense they professed to have of the frowns of Heaven upon us, and the propriety of imploring God's gracious and powerful interposition."

The theme on which the preacher discoursed, in these circumstances of painful interest, was, '*Reformation of manners, of absolute necessity in order to conciliate the divine favor in times of public evil and distress.*' His text was chosen from the first Epistle of Peter 5 : 6. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." After a brief and pertinent introduction, he remarked—

"The words of our text lead us to the consideration of an important duty under calamitous events. *Humble yourselves, &c.*

They lead us also to a consideration of the happy effect, and consequence of complying with this duty. *That He may exalt, &c.*"

Having illustrated both these points with his usual good sense and ability, he proceeded to meet the demands of that momentous occasion by a plain and pointed application of the subject.

"But I will no further enlarge here, but shall offer some things with plainness, and I trust with seriousness, relative to the occasion of the day, and agreeable to the subject I have been discoursing upon. It is, I suppose, universally acknowledged to be a day of great public distress and difficulty, so that we know not well what to do, nor how to extricate ourselves.

Let what will have been the instrumental or secondary causes, yet I trust you have all of you this sense of things, that the great Governor of the world, in his overruling

providence, has brought about such a state of things among us. Or why do we appear before God in his house this day, to spread our case before him, and to supplicate the kind interpositions of his providence towards us? Is not the language of this day's solemnity this, that we look upon it, that the mighty hand of God is lifted up against us, that he has a controversy with us, that we lay under his frowns and displeasure? If we have not such a sense of matters as this, it would be trifling with the Divine Majesty, and indeed be a mockery of him, to come before him this day in this manner. And as it is written, God will not be mocked, I should be loth to entertain an opinion of any one who has desired that such a day might be observed, that it was from a party spirit, but would charitably hope, that it was to do honor to the great Governor of the world, religiously to acknowledge him as superintending human affairs, and accordingly to supplicate the gracious and powerful interpositions of his providence to relieve us from all our difficulties and distresses. And in this view of the case, and if we are humbled under the mighty hand of God, and the solemnities of this day are followed with a universal repentance and reformation, we may hope that in due time God will exalt us, that he will relieve us of all our burdens and difficulties, and restore us to a state of prosperity and happiness. Nor unless this is the case with us, may we upon any good and solid grounds expect this. For as sin is a reproach to a people, so it has a tendency, both naturally and morally, to destruction and ruin.

As to religion, that which is pure and undefiled before God and the Father, perhaps there has been as great a

proportion of this in New England as in any part of the Christian world.

The fathers of this land were actuated from this noble principle in forsaking their native country, and their many near and dear connections and fair inheritances, and enterprising the settlement of this howling wilderness. Religion appeared in its true glory and lustre, in the early times of this country. There was a great regard to the holy Scriptures, a great regard to the holy Sabbath and public worship; and men would go great distances willingly and cheerfully, rather than be deprived of such precious advantages and privileges. There was a great regard to family worship, instruction and government, there was much of kindness, brotherly love and charity in those puritanic times. And profane cursing and swearing was a rare thing indeed, and many enormities and vicious practices, which have greatly obtained in modern times, were scarcely known among them. I don't mean to represent that generation as absolutely perfect, for this is incompatible to the present state. Nevertheless, they were very generally a very excellent set of men. And their names and their memories, as they have been, so will be in future generations fragrant as the precious ointment. And the holy and righteous God owned and honored them accordingly. That righteousness, which was so conspicuous among them, greatly exalted them. God was with them and for them, and who then could be against them? Verily none, and so it appeared; for by a variety of remarkable interpositions of his providence, God drove out the heathen before them, prepared room for them, and they prospered and increased under the smiles of heaven, and laid a broad

foundation for those that came after them to build upon. And a grand and noble superstructure has been raised upon it, as we see at this day : and particularly since the conclusion of the last war, in which the country of Canada that was so long a scourge to us—since, I say, that country has been subjected to the British empire, what a surprising spread and increase has there been to the English territories!

The primitive, religious constitution of this country was very excellent, and under the smiles and blessing of the God of grace, has been abundantly effectual to subserve the ends of vital piety and godliness, and the purposes of redeeming grace. We have had excellent means of liberal education, through the pious care of our ancestors; our churches have greatly multiplied ; and we have as great a proportion of able, learned, pious, and faithful ministers of the Gospel, as any part of the christian world can boast of. And such I doubt not they are at present, however lightly esteemed by some, and however some may be disposed to distress them and reduce them to penurious circumstances, to the great hindrance of the Gospel, as well as damage to the commonwealth. For however regardless many may be of the Gospel and the spiritual and everlasting blessings of it, yet it seems to be the general opinion that the Christian ministry is an excellent institution, considered only in a civil and political light. And I would just say further, here, that if it was wholly suppressed and banished the land, we should be in a situation not far superior to that of the aboriginal natives.

We have had an excellent civil constitution, good and wholesome laws, the due execution of which has produced

the most salutary, and beneficial effects. At present, this people are thrown into great distress and perplexity through the operation of certain acts of the British legislature, imposing duties and taxes upon them, which, if the right it claims should be granted, yet must be looked upon by all, as contrary to the principles of sound policy, considering the intercourse between the parent state and the colonies, and the vast commercial interest maintained between them to their mutual benefit and advantage.

Very sad is the present situation of our *capital town*, blocked up by a powerful squadron, to the cramping of its navigation and commerce, and the impoverishment and distress of multitudes. And this distress that has befallen it, must have its influence upon the whole community. If the head suffers, the members must in many respects suffer with it. May God afford deliverance in due time, and give us occasion to rejoice in the kind interpositions of his providence in removing this and every other difficulty and grievance. For we ought to bear this in mind, that our main dependence in the case is upon his overruling providence. We are not to trust in an arm of flesh, but in the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength. Unto him are we to pray, and unto him must we return, that he may return in favor to us. "Turn us again, O God of hosts, cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved." It is at present, as has been said, a time of great perplexity and distress. But are we to look altogether to the dark side of things? Is there no bright side to turn to? Yes, verily, there is. Thus it is a remarkable time of health throughout the land. We hear of no contagious, mortal sickness prevailing any where. We have not this season been visited

with scorching droughts, with devouring insects. We have had the refreshing rains and shines of heaven; and the fruits of the earth necessary for the support of man and beasts, were perhaps never in a more flourishing state, nor had a better prospect of a plentiful increase.

We yet enjoy our quiet Sabbaths, and Christian institutions, the day and the means of grace. And so I might mention many other favors and blessings of heaven; so that notwithstanding all our difficulties and grievances, yet our state is not absolutely forlorn and desperate. We have a bright side to look to, and ought to look to it; we have great reason for thankfulness to the great Governor of the world, at the same time that we have much cause for humiliation before him, considering the moral grounds and reasons of this controversy with us.

We are desirous of being extricated out of all our difficulties, and enjoying public good and happiness of every kind. Now the subject I have been discoursing upon, directs us to the most effectual method to betake ourselves to, in order to this. The way to be exalted, is to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. All schemes and plans that may be laid, all endeavors that may be used, are not of that importance, nor will they be likely to be so efficacious, as securing the friendship, the guardianship and protection of the God of heaven, who has all events and all hearts in his hands, and who can in the most surprising, unexpected manner, scatter dark clouds, change the face of things, bring good out of evil, and open a fair, bright, and refreshing scene, turn our mourning into dancing, put off our sackcloth and gird us with gladness. O! what a great thing it is to have the omnipotent God engage on the side

of a people! Every thing then must go well with them in spite of all obstructions and oppositions. For there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord. Prov. 21: 30. There is none that can avail any thing, any more than for a worm to pretend to cope with a lion.

But in order that we may enjoy the friendship of God, and be under his smiles and blessings, we must on our part be in friendship with him. And then only are we so, when we are brought to that repentance and reformation that we have spoken of this day. This, verily, is of very great importance in regard to God's glory, and as we would consult our own good and prosperity even at present. O that there were such a heart in us all, and in this whole people, that we may humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time. If vice and wickedness, especially in all their grosser forms, were suppressed, and piety and virtue, righteousness, temperance, charity, &c., were generally to prevail in the midst of us, what a token for good would this be! We might then securely depend upon God's kind care and protection, and his blessing would be upon us in all regards. But now, instead of the prevalence of these duties and virtues, is it not too evident, that we are a people ladened with iniquity, notwithstanding all the goodness of God that he has manifested to us, and notwithstanding all his frowns and displeasure, which by our iniquities we have procured?

Can it be said that the troubles, perplexities and difficulties of the present day have produced a general repentance and reformation of manners? May it not be truly said, that the lusts and corruptions of many have greatly and un-

happily operated, which instead of diminishing, have very much increased our troubles; that jealousies and resentments have been entertained among old friends, neighbors and relatives? What hard and opprobrious names have been given to one another; what a disposition to raise and propagate false reports without regarding the mischievous consequences of them. Yea, what wrath and malice, bitterness, clamor and evil speaking, have there been. How much horrible profaneness and impiety has there been, to the dishonor of God, to the eating out of the very vitals of religion, the religion of the blessed Jesus, which breathes a quite different spirit, and tending also to the destruction of the very form of it.

Such evils as these, alas! how greatly prevalent have they been in these days, in which the mighty hand of God has been lifted up against us. Nor is his anger turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. It is far from being agreeable to me, in itself considered, to enumerate the evils of the times, but I should not be faithful if I did not. And all who are themselves conscientious, must approve of faithfulness in others.

I would now offer a few things by way of counsel, hoping they will be received and practically regarded.

In the first place, let every one search and try his own heart and ways, humble himself before God, implore forgiveness through Christ, and grace for the future, to live in a holy, obedient manner. If it should be thus with every one, then reformation would be general. And in this case we might hope to be highly exalted.

Again; let it be the care of every one to get possessed of a spirit of charity and brotherly kindness. This is of

very great importance to the comfort and well-being of societies, both the greater and the less. For where there is contention, there is confusion and every evil work. In almost all matters, civil, secular and religious, a diversity of sentiments takes place amongst mankind. It is in vain to expect, that in all things they will be of the same mind and of the same judgment. And therefore a great deal of forbearance, candor, condescension, meekness, and charity, is necessary. Persons may and ought to be good neighbors and friends, and to treat one another as brethren, however they may be of different opinions from one another in many matters.

Brotherly kindness or charity, as it is a great Christian duty, so it is the beauty, strength and glory of societies. It tends greatly to alleviate burdens and to sweeten life. I shall only just add here, the fine and beautiful description of charity in the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, 13th chap., 4—8. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth: beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Another thing I would mention, relative to the observation of this day. Some may not see their way clear to observe it, it not being enjoined in the usual way. Now as no one is under any compulsion in the case, so I would earnestly advise that there may be no hard and severe reflections cast upon any, and that there be no uncivil, indecent conduct towards any upon the occasion. Let there be nothing inconsistent with the character of men and

Christians. This will doubtless be productive of the most salutary and comfortable effects.

Again; with respect to those that have been desirous of the observation of this day, (and this seems to be very general,) I would say that you ought to regard it as unto the Lord. Do not you hereby profess to do honor to the Governor of the world, to express your unworthiness before him, your dependence upon him, to acknowledge and bewail your sins which have occasioned him to lift up his mighty hand, and to bring us into difficulties and distresses, to implore his forgiveness and the return of his favor? Those that are sincere and hearty in all this, may upon good grounds hope and expect that God will accept them therein. You mean the solemnity of this day, brethren, or the attendance upon it, as an act of religion. Now won't you, all of you, carry the religion of this day into your families? Won't you consider it as your duty, besides joining in the public prayers of the sanctuary, to offer up your prayers and supplications to the divine majesty in your houses, for those favors and blessings from him that are peculiarly needed in the present day, and which we have publicly spread before God? Or does this day's observance complete the whole affair?

May it not justly be expected by God himself that a genuine repentance and reformation will follow this day's solemnity? Shall it be said that any after this go on in profaneness, intemperance, unchastity, in fraud and oppression, in bitterness, wrath, malice, anger, dishonesty, unrighteousness, Sabbath breaking, and neglecting the public worship of God? Shall it be said after this, that there are any more prayerless families, that live like heathens, not

calling upon the name of the Lord? I must speak freely and faithfully here, that I fear that there are a great many prayerless families among you, and I must earnestly expostulate with you upon this head. Why will you thus live without God in the world? Are you afraid or ashamed to acknowledge your Maker and daily Benefactor? Can you live without him, live independent of him? You surely will not acknowledge this, unless you are professed atheists. But I am well persuaded that none of you are of this abandoned class of mortals. You acknowledge, all of you, I presume, that there is a God, and that you are absolutely dependent upon him for public, personal and family blessings. And will you not then erect an altar for him in your houses, whereon to offer religious sacrifices daily, morning and evening? How can you expect the blessing of God upon your persons or families, if you neglect having any concern with him in the way I have now mentioned? I must earnestly exhort such as have hitherto neglected family worship, that they immediately set it up, and not make a bye business of it, but constantly attend it. Consider what you owe to your children. They are committed to your care not only to provide for their outward welfare and comfort, but to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And is it likely that they will have any sense of God or religion, if they see their parents live in the neglect of such a plain incumbent duty, as that of family worship is? And will not religion, the most important thing in the world, be lost among the rising generation if you go on in such a neglect? I hope what I have now said upon this matter will be seriously laid to heart by those of you to whom it is especially applicable. And may

it please God to render it effectual to bring about a reformation in this matter. And I would just add in a word, that it will ill become those to live in the neglect of family worship, who have discovered a zeal that this day of fasting and prayer be observed on account of our public difficulties.

I shall now close all with briefly saying, that while you are in such anxiety respecting your civil liberties, it infinitely concerns you, that you be in earnest, that you may have a share in the glorious liberties and privileges of the children of God. Civil liberty it is acknowledged is a most valuable enjoyment, and what all are earnestly desirous of the enjoyment of. And as every one is desirous of it for himself, so every one ought to be willing that his neighbor should enjoy it. But is it acting a consistent part to vilify and reproach others, because they take that liberty which God and nature have given them to think and speak differently from them? No one can soberly pretend this. No doubt all aim at the same thing, whatever difference there may be in opinion and conduct. Let us remember, brethren, that the present scene will quickly be closed upon us, and we shall have no more any concern with the affairs and transactions of the present state. And if we get to heaven, as God in his infinite mercy through Christ grant we all may, we shall there be all of one heart and soul. There harmony, love and peace, will universally take place. There we shall enjoy liberty of the right sort, be eternally free from the bondage of Satan, and our own corruptions, and all the penal effects of them, and love God, and love one another entirely and sincerely, and with the

utmost freedom and cheerfulness serve and glorify God and the Lamb throughout eternal ages."

Before closing the account of Mr. Maccarty and his ministry, it may not be impertinent to allude to several incidents of historical interest respecting the changes that took place in the mode of seating people in the meeting-house, the public reading of the Scriptures, and the manner of conducting public praise. As a particular description of these changes, in the body of this work, might not be regarded as strictly in keeping with its main design, the reader who would become acquainted with them, is referred to the Appendix.*

§ 5. Rev. Samuel Austin, D. D.

After Mr. Maccarty's decease, more than six years elapsed before the installation of his successor. They were eventful years to the First Church. In their progress, radical differences of opinion on points of doctrine were disclosed, unkind feelings were generated, divisions took place that time could not heal, and causes were put in operation which have wrought important changes in the developments of social and of Christian life. Many gentlemen officiated in the pulpit during this period, but either the people failed to unite in selecting any one of them to be their pastor and teacher, or the object of their choice saw reasons for declining their invitation. Serious differences of religious opinion presented an insuperable obstacle to agreement on the same

* Note E.

man for a religious teacher. Secession was the natural, if not necessary result. Numbers formed themselves into a new society, established separate worship, and attended upon the ministrations of Rev. Aaron Bancroft. Of these transactions, due notice will be taken in a subsequent part of this work.

In 1786, the Rev. Daniel Story was invited to settle here, on a salary of £120, with a gratuity of £300. He accepted the invitation, the day of his ordination was designated, and a committee appointed to make suitable preparations. Before the day arrived, another meeting voted that the time be postponed. At an adjourned meeting, probably by Mr. Story's desire, the invitation was recalled. He could not persuade himself to labor permanently, where embittered divisions would be likely at once to impair his peace and prevent his usefulness. Retiring from the place where he had labored for about two years, he preached in Concord, N. H. Respectable acquisitions and an agreeable manner could not do away the force of the impression that he was tinctured with Arminianism, and he was not settled there. Having removed to Ohio, he became the first minister of Marietta. Born in Boston, Mass., he was graduated from Dartmouth College, N. H., in 1780, settled in the State of Ohio, and died in Marietta, in 1813.

Several candidates were heard during the two years that followed Mr. Story's retirement, but no one united the suffrages of the people on himself, until the name of the Rev. Samuel Austin, of New Haven, was presented to them. He was invited to settle here, March 22, and installed, Sept. 29, 1790. The following clergymen assisted in the public services of his installation:

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The Rev. Samuel Spring, of Newburyport, invoked the divine blessing; Rev. Samuel Hopkins, of Hadley, preached the Sermon; Rev. Ebenezer Chaplin, of Sutton, made the Installing Prayer; Rev. Joseph Sumner, of Shrewsbury, delivered the Charge; Rev. Nathaniel Williams, of Brimfield, proffered the Right Hand of Fellowship; and Rev. Nathanael Emmons, of Franklin, led the concluding devotions of the assembly.

The salary voted to Mr. Austin, was £130. In consequence of disapprobation expressed by a single individual to the settlement of this candidate, and for the purpose of ascertaining whether any considerable opposition existed, a meeting was called to test the feelings of the people a second time. The result of the meeting was, that seventy-three were in favor of, and only two against him. Soon after his installation, there was a revision of the creed and covenant of the church.*

The life of Dr. Austin was full of stirring incident. There are but few men of any profession or calling, whose lives present more diversity of scene and action, than did his. Born in New Haven, Ct., Nov. 7, 1760, he remained with his parents till the war of the revolution broke out. Shortly after this, young Austin became a substitute for his father, who had been drafted as a soldier, and did service for him in the city of New York.. The surrender of that city to the British occasioned his discharge, and he returned to his parents. For two or three years, he divided his time between school-teaching and military service. About the age of twenty years, he decided on entering a professional life. The study of law first attracted his atten-

* Appendix F.

tion, and he commenced the preparatory course for that profession with Judge Chauncy,* of New Haven. He was soon aware that, in order to attain to eminence in the profession, he must revise his earlier studies and secure a more thorough intellectual discipline. Devoting himself to the classics with his characteristic ardor, he made such progress that, in 1781, he entered Yale College and became a member of the Sophomore class. While preparing for college, his mind seems to have been deeply impressed with his religious responsibilities, and he became the subject of that moral transformation which turned his thoughts and desires in a new direction, and gave him a new object to study and to live for. In the first year of his college life, he was admitted to the church by President Stiles, and thenceforward, while reason held her throne, he gave indisputable proof that 'for him to live was Christ.' From a diary he kept, some of the first leaves of which are lost, the following extract will indicate the spirit with which he commenced his religious life. The imperfect manuscript thus begins: "*Jesus Christ* to be my Saviour, and the *Holy Spirit* of all grace to be my *sanctifier:* and promise, by the grace of God helping me, without which I can do nothing, to walk according to all the precepts of God exhibited in

* Charles Chauncy, L.L. D , was a descendant of Charles Chauncy, the second President of Harvard College. He was born in Durham, Ct., June 11th, 1747. A graduate from no college, he was admitted to the bar in 1768. Yale gave him the degree of A. M., and Middlebury, that of L.L. D. In 1789, he was appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court of Ct. He died at New Haven, in 1823, at the age of 75. His thirst for knowledge was unquenchable, and he was admirably qualified for the high station to which he was elevated. A firm believer in the Scriptures, he was an intelligent and devoted Christian. His old age was honorable and peaceful, his death triumphant.—*Allen's Biog. Dic'y.*

His word, to practice all known duty, and avoid all known sin—to adorn the doctrine of *God my Saviour*, and to live as becomes a member of the church militant of our *Lord and Saviour* Jesus Christ."

During his collegiate course, Mr. Austin united in his own person two things that are far too often separated in the life of a student—earnest devotion to scholarship, and assiduous culture of the Christian graces. Religious principle seems to have pervaded his whole conduct. Not less, but more a student because he was a Christian, he was not less a Christian because he must needs be a scholar. What he was in the latter character, will appear from the following letter of a class-mate,* who knew him well, and could judge impartially. "He was an assiduous and thorough scholar. Attentive to all the prescribed duties of college, sober and discreet, he sustained an unblemished character. An excellent linguist, he was a *Dean*† scholar. Regarded always as a very good speaker, he received as the reward of merit, the first appointment in the exercises of commencement, when he was graduated. His maturity of years, with unremitted attention to his studies, gave him a rank, to say the least, among the first scholars of his class."

His determination that study should not interfere with devotion, or that the ambition of a scholar should not suppress the 'panting of the heart after God,' is obvious from one or two of the Resolutions which he adopted as rules for his daily conduct: "Resolved to watch strictly over my own heart, that it be not, on the one hand, too much capti-

* Hon. Judge Daggett, New Haven, who attended on Mr. Austin's preaching when he was settled in Fair-Haven.

† Scholarship instituted by *Dean* Berkley, subsequently Bishop of Cloyne.

vated by the world and its pleasures, and, on the other, that it be daily conversant in *heaven*, and fixed on God."

"Resolved that every day, before morning prayer, I will look forward into the probable business of the day, and see wherein I shall be exposed to temptation, and to determine accordingly; and to survey the day with this idea, that I will live as piously that day as though it were my last. And now, though I shall by no means be likely to live so, without divine assistance, yet I pray *God* to enable me, by the assistance of *His holy and blessed Spirit*."

A perusal of his diary, will shew that these and their associated Resolutions had a restraining, purifying and elevating influence on his mind and character all the way through college, and indeed through life. "He began from his conversion to walk with God on earth; he sought to consecrate every faculty of his soul to the divine glory, while he was forming and fitting himself for usefulness; and, by the grace of God, he was a burning and shining light in every station which he was afterwards called to occupy in the church."*

Having completed his collegiate course with the first honors of his class,† he devoted himself to the study of theology. Law might still have had attractions for him, but Divinity was far more congenial to his feelings, besides being imperative with his conscience. Dr. Jonathan Edwards of New Haven was his instructor. While reading for his profession, he was also engaged in teaching. In

* Am. Qu. Register, IX. 207.

† His class numbered forty-two. Among others, the Hon. Judge Daggett, the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the Rev. Dr. Morse, and the Hon. John Cotton Smith, L.L. D. belonged to it. Of the whole number, thirteen became ministers of the Gospel.—*Historical Sermon of the Rev. Mr. Dutton*, p. 78.

1784, he commenced preaching the Gospel, and continued to preach almost every Sabbath during his residence in Norwich, where he taught the Academy until the autumn of 1785. While there, he received two invitations to settle in the Gospel ministry—one to be pastor of the church in Hampton, Ct., the other to be colleague with the late Dr. Livingston,* in the Middle Dutch Church, in New York. Both these invitations he declined; the latter, 'because the church practiced and were disposed to adhere to the half-way covenant; under which he could not consent to become their pastor.'

On the 9th of Nov. 1786, he was ordained over the church of Fair Haven, in New Haven.† Dr. Edwards

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* The Rev. John H. Livingston, D. D., a native of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., was born in 1746, and graduated at Yale College, in the class of 1762. In 1766, he went to the University of Utrecht, in Holland, to pursue the study of Theology. Having remained there four years, and received the degree of doctor in theology, he returned to his native country, and became pastor of the Middle Dutch church, in the city of New York. In 1784, he became professor of theology in the Dutch church. He performed the duties of both offices until 1810, when he was appointed President of Queen's College, New Brunswick, where he remained till his decease, in 1825. He was a man of great intellectual vigor and eminent scholarship. A well-read theologian, he taught with great success the many whose theological studies he guided. Ardent in temperament and having a ready command of language, he entered the pulpit without notes, and preached with such accuracy and force that his audience hung with delight upon his lips. He was eminently useful while he lived, and his memory is precious.—*Allen's Biographical Dictionary.*

† This church too, had adopted the half-way covenant; but "when Mr. Austin was settled, he made a sort of compromise with those in the society who were in favor of the half way covenant, which at that time was often made in similar circumstances. He consented that those who had already owned that covenant, might continue to have their children baptized; not by himself, but by some minister who had no conscientious scruples against the practice, with whom he would exchange, to afford an opportunity for the performance of the rite."—*Mr. Dutton's Sermon, p.* 79.

preached the sermon on that occasion, President Stiles gave the charge, and Dr. Wales the right hand of fellowship. He was united in marriage to Miss Jerusha, daughter of Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D. D., of Hadley, Mass., in 1788, Sept. 14th. The union contributed essentially to his happiness and usefulness. They had no children.

After three years' service with the church of Fair-Haven, Mr. Austin asked that his pastoral relation might be discontinued. The society had been weakened by secession, and some of those who remained were dissatisfied with the pastor's strenuous opposition to the half-way covenant. He left them, however, with feelings of kindness. While there, devoting himself to their interests with affection and fidelity, he was highly appreciated for his talents and learning, and greatly respected for his integrity and upright deportment. Those who felt the pressure of his unbending principles, saw that he was ruled by the authority of conscience. Before leaving Fair-Haven, he received an invitation from the First Church in Worcester, to become their pastor. Dismissed from preëxisting relations, he accepted the call, and in a few months, entered upon this field of labor.

Mr. Austin commenced his duties in Worcester with large promise of success. His eminent natural endowments, intellectual acquisitions, varied experience, maturity of age and judgment, and the unanimity with which he was invited to occupy this position, all gave assurance of distinguished usefulness. Finding pleasure in the study, he assiduously devoted himself to investigations of theological truth. No themes so attractive to him as the doctrines of christianity, he labored to give them in his own mind the power of con-

secutive arrangement and the beauty of harmony.* So laborious was he in his study that his 'profiting appeared unto all.' Panting after success and often discouraged because its visible forms did not meet his eye, he yet concentrated all the energies of an ardent nature upon the work of his life. Eminently happy in his devotional exercises, energetic and subduing in his sermons, he wielded great power in the pulpit—even now he is spoken of by those who distinctly recollect him, as remarkable for the

* The report was at one time prevalent that Dr. Austin preached the damnation of infants, and that he expressed this sentiment in the most repulsive and shocking form. In 'Thomas' Reminiscences,' that report is embodied, while the impression is left that there is quite too much truth in it.* Justice to the memory of a good man demands that the report should be positively contradicted. The Rev. Dr. Nelson, of Leicester, who studied theology with Dr. Austin, has assured the writer, that he took occasion once to intimate to his revered instructor that such a report was in circulation, and that some professed to believe it. Dr. Austin unhesitatingly denied that he had ever preached such a doctrine, or that he had ever entertained such a belief. He added, in his own earnest manner, that he held the sentiment in as utter abhorrence as those who intimated that he had inculcated it.

"Although he was *accused* of holding to, and uttering the doctrine of *infant damnation*, yet during the several years I sat under his ministry, and in all my intercourse with him while under his instruction as a student in theology, I never heard him utter any such doctrine. Nor had I the slightest reason to believe that he held any such. But as an individual of some standing in society, about the time of my settlement in Leicester, said to me that he himself heard Dr. Austin utter this abhorred doctrine in the most explicit and offensive terms, I determined to avail myself of his (Dr. A's) own express contradiction of this statement, notwithstanding I was at the time fully persuaded of its falseness. I accordingly asked him if he had ever used such language as I told him was charged upon him, or had, in any language or in any way, taught the doctrine of infant damnation? '*No*,' he emphatically replied, '*my whole soul revolts from such an idea.*'"—*Letter of Dr. Nelson.*

* "Mr. Austin was of the Hopkintonian school, and preached original sin, and *there being infants in hell not a span long.* I heard him once, and did not grudge him his faith."—*Sketches of his own Life and Times, by E. S. Thomas. Vol. II., p.* 14.

pathos of his manner, and the force of his appeals. Such preaching could not be long without visible demonstrations of good effect. His church were quickened in thought, and excited to more holy endeavor. A deeper tone of spirituality characterized their religious life, and a keener relish of sound and discriminating views of divine truth, was generated among them. The process, at first, was gradual; but afterwards became more decided and rapid. Nearly a hundred individuals dated a marked change in their religious history from impressions made by his preaching; and many, who, after he left, became hopefully pious, ascribed much of the influence which brought them to Christ to the blessing of God upon his faithful labors. There are some even at the present day, who trace the best part of their lives to the words of wisdom which he uttered, and the prayers of faith which he offered to God in the name of the Mediator.

Nor were his labors restricted within the bounds of his own parish. He was useful by his counsels when called to advise in cases of difficulty; by yielding to repeated requests to preach on occasions of public interest; and by directing the theological studies of a number of young men, preparing for the ministry. His benevolent spirit impelled him to be active in all enterprises of the day which had for their object the glory of the church of Christ or the well-being of man. Liberal in heart, he devised liberal things. His influence was felt in the originating of the General Association of Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Missionary Society came into being by the aid of his presence and the advocacy of his voice. One of its trustees and its first secretary, he promoted its interest with no reluctant endea-

vor as long as Worcester was his home. This Society, whose constitution bears the date of May, 1799, important as it was in itself, was the means of large additional good, by leading the way to those national benevolent institutions which have been the harbingers of mercy to other lands, as they are the glory of our own.

Another form in which his wise benevolence found exercise, was the arrangement and publication of the works of President Edwards. This was 'a labor of love' performed with great discretion, and with much satisfaction to the christian community. Herein he "gratified his personal attachment to that execllent man, sought the advancement of the great doctrines of the cross, particularly among the younger clergy, and the excitement of their zeal by a persuasive example."* In furtherence of the benevolent end with which he began the work, he disposed of many copies of it to theological students, at a very reduced price:—a fact which induced one of their professors to say of him, 'He was a man of generous, noble heart, and loved to give money for benevolent objects, and to make efforts in other ways to do good.'†

Thus ardent in zeal, diligent in study, indefatigable in effort, and with a passion for doing good, it is not wonderful that Dr. Austin‡ wielded great influence among his own people, or that his reputation was widely extended. At home he had many friends, and they were ardently attached to him. But it would be incorrect to suppose that he had not also bitter enemies. As he was a man of strong feelings and decided convictions, as, moreover, he

* Preface to the 'Worcester Edition.' † Am. Qu. Register, IX. 211.

‡ He received the degree of Doctor in Divinity from Williams College, in 1807.

was in the habit of uttering his sentiments in language that could not easily be misinterpreted, it would be unreasonable to suppose that he could have exercised the office of the ministry here without some jarring of opinions and some friction of sensibilities. It is also to be recollected, that in the course of his ministry, political parties were greatly at variance, sectional prejudices strong, and strifes were waged with animosities more than ordinarily fierce and virulent. In such circumstances, the utterances of the pulpit would be carefully noted, and any thing that should seem to favor one side at the expense of the other, would evoke approval here and excite opposition there. But Dr. Austin was not the man to be awed into silence by a frown, or made communicative by a smile. Thinking for himself on all subjects of interest, and entertaining no doubt that religious principle should govern the pen, the tongue and the hand, in the political, as well as in other departments of life, he did not hesitate to express his convictions and suggest counsels even on those subjects of public interest, on which he was well aware parties differed. On public fasts he frankly told his people what he believed, and how he would act in regard to civil affairs.* This, of course, provoked opposition. At one time, so great was the excitement produced by political discourses, that a public meeting was called, to decide whether the parish would tolerate such preaching, and whether they thought it expedient that

* Some of these fast sermons were published. The one preached July 23, 1812, and which occasioned no slight agitation, has on its title page the following quaint notice: "Published from the press, by the desire of some who heard it, and liked it; by the desire of some who heard it, and did not like it: and by the desire of others who did not hear it, but imagine that they should not have liked it if they had."

existing relations between them and their minister should continue. Dr. Austin was sustained by a large majority of the meeting; and whether his friends approved all that he had said or not, they were determined that his freedom of speech, whether in or out of the pulpit, should not be abridged. Several of the disaffected withdrew, and eventually aided in forming the Baptist Society.

For twenty-five years, Dr. Austin 'fulfilled' his ministry in Worcester with great ability and to the general satisfaction of his people. In 1815, having been invited to the presidency of the University of Vermont, he asked a dismission from his pastoral charge. His dismission, however, did not take place until the 23d of December, 1818. At first, he had leave of absence three months, that he might by inquiry decide intelligently whether he would accept the presidency that had been tendered to him, and that the parish might have opportunity to hear candidates, with a view to the settlement of a colleague or successor. After he had decided to remain at Burlington, he was induced still to retain his pastoral connection in Worcester, on account of the civil process commenced in his name by the parish against the town, for the recovery of lands. This case decided, the strong wishes of members of the church and parish influenced him to delay a formal separation for some time longer.

The trial was indeed great of a separation between a devoted pastor and an endeared people. It was with no small difficulty, that they who had sat under his ministry for years, could be made to believe that duty called him away from relations so happily existing, to an untried service among strangers. The college, whose operations had

been suspended for two or three years during the war with Great Britain, was in a sadly dilapidated condition. Its buildings had been converted into barracks, its students dispersed, and its income was hardly equal to the support of a single professor. But a strenuous effort was now making to resuscitate its energies and commence a process which should realize the intentions of its founders. It became a conviction in the mind of Dr. Austin, that the cause of science and religion demanded his acceptance of the presidency. His conviction of duty settled, every thing else must yield to that. Go he must, and go he did. Whatever doubt subsequently disturbed his mind as to the expediency of so great a change, he then felt that necessity was laid upon him to undertake that service. Trying to himself and distressing to his people, it was with great regret that a council of his brethren in the ministry yielded assent to his dismission. Their particular views may be inferred from the following extract from their result:

"This council cannot but unanimously express their high esteem of Dr. Austin, and the sense they entertain of his worth. When invited to leave this region, and take the charge of the college at Burlington, they deeply lamented that he felt it his duty to resign his charge of the First Church and Society in Worcester, and accept the appointment; especially, since, in the apprehension of this council, he was a pillar in the church, a faithful watchman and an able defender of the faith on this part of the walls of Zion, where his talents, learning, counsel, and pious zeal were so much needed."

Installed in his new office, July, 1815, he carried with him to its embarrassing duties his characteristic ardor of

devotion, benevolence of purpose and untiring activity. A few weeks after having commenced his new labors, he writes: "Here I am, a solitary stranger, without my family; attempting to raise and render respectable and useful this institution.—I infinitely need, and most earnestly pray for the guiding hand and consoling presence of God." For six years he gave his best thoughts and his concentrated energies to the enterprise in hand. Unimpeachable testimony proves to us that he labored diligently and wisely. One* associated with him in the office of instruction writes:

"As a president, he was faithful to the trust reposed in him. Sincerely devoted to the interests of the college, and untiring in his efforts to promote them, he enjoyed the confidence and respect of the public. He presided with dignity, mingled with affability and Christian philanthropy. His solicitude for the spiritual welfare of the students was most ardent and exemplary. If his knowledge in the physical sciences, in philosophy and general literature, was, in any degree deficient in precision and accuracy, it was yet various and comprehensive. In the metaphysical sciences, and particularly in mental and moral philosophy, he was an able and interesting instructor. As a governor of the institution, he was mild and affectionate, yet dignified and faithful. All his pupils loved and respected him. To his subordinate officers, he was peculiarly affectionate and kind."

But the embarrassments of the college were too great to be removed at once. The difficulties of the position were more serious than he anticipated. The immediate results looked for were not realized. 'Hope deferred made the

* Rev. Dr. Murdock.

heart sick.' He longed also more than ever, to give his undivided energies to preaching the Gospel. As one expressed it, "he panted for its labors and enjoyments." Though he had done all that could reasonably be asked of him in the circumstances, yet he despaired of accomplishing the results on which his heart had been set, and accordingly resigned his office as president, in 1821.

Retiring from Burlington, he became pastor of a feeble church in Newport, R. I., once the charge of that distinguished divine, the Rev. Dr. Hopkins. One reason he assigns for selecting this people was, that they had not the means of giving him an adequate support. Intimating to them that he was at their service if they desired his ministrations, he was gratefully welcomed by them, as he gladly hastened thither to be the 'servant of that church for Jesus' sake.'

That year he was elected a corporate member of the A. B. C. F. M. From the first, he had taken a deep interest in this association.

For the period of four years, he rendered faithful service to that feeble church; nor were his 'labors in the Lord' futile. The perceptible decline of his health and the weight of advancing years, admonished him that it would be wise to retire from the responsible situation he occupied and seek a place where he might spend the evening of his days in comparative repose. Resigning his charge in Newport, he returned, in 1825, to Worcester, where he expected to find a pleasant home the residue of his days, in the family of his nephew and adopted son, John W. Hubbard, Esq. — He preached some time in Millbury, and was invited to take charge of a church then recently formed

there. This his increasing illness prevented. The sudden death of his adopted son, and the breaking up of that family where the slow hours of sickness and mental depression might be cheered by the kind offices of filial affection, involved him in the deepest affliction. Devolving upon him the entangled affairs of a business to which his health and energies were by no means equal, these sad visitations, as they greatly overtasked his remains of strength, induced extreme depression of spirits. Constitutionally inclined to gaze intently on the dark side of life's picture, and having already met with numerous disheartening incidents, these additional and unanticipated trials were too much for his faith. The light of hope was well nigh extinguished, and a cloud of melancholy began to settle down upon his spirit. Physical disease, in the form of a confirmed dyspepsia, completely prostrating his mental energies, at length produced mental aberration. This was at first apparent in connection with the pecuniary embarrassments which had given him so much trouble; but soon it was transferred to a subject of far deeper interest — his own Christian experience and personal interest in Christ. He was emphatically a monomaniac respecting his whole religious history. Never more conscientious than then, never giving more conclusive evidence of a heart in love with holiness and in sympathy with Christ's, he yet was certain in his own mind that there was nothing but sin in his best actions, and nothing but despair and darkness in his prospects for eternity. A discerning friend writes, "Even in that state of partial derangement and melancholy in which he closed his days, when the darkness of despair settled down upon him, and he had no hope of himself, his piety often shone out from

behind the cloud with great lustre and beauty." "In that grief which he sometimes indulged, under the mistaken impression that he had always been a hypocrite, and that, when he had preached to others, he must himself be a castaway, it was easy to discover the sorrows of repentance, and the meltings of a broken heart."* But most of all, the past life proved that the heart was devoted to God, and that present despair could easily be traced to physical disease developing an hereditary predisposition.†

For some four years, until death released him from his sufferings, Dr. Austin remained very much in the same state of health and mind. There was a mournful harmony between the paroxysms of his melancholy and the aggravations of his corporeal infirmity. In March, 1827, he went to Northampton, to receive the kind attention of the family of his brother-in-law, Mr. John Hopkins. While there, after listening to a sermon, he said with indescribable interest to the preacher, "You told us, in your preaching, that we must part with *sin*, or must part with *God*. When I heard this, I felt — Oh! *I can't part with God* — I can't part with *God!*" His house was emphatically built upon a rock. The rains descended, the floods beat against it; but it fell not. His soul was fixed on God — unconsciously, indeed, but none the less really for that.

In 1828, he went to Glastenbury, Ct., to reside with his nephew, Rev. Samuel H. Riddel. There he received every attention that affectionate kindness could dictate, and, at times, exhibited a degree of hope and cheerfulness. In conversation with others, he would apparently forget

*Am. Qu. Register, ix, 215.

† The son substantially repeated the sad experience of the mother, in her last days.

himself. But his work was done; his sufferings were soon to close. The light of eternity was about to dawn upon his darkness, and his 'light affliction which was but for a moment' was shortly to be succeeded by 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' On the 4th of December, 1830, in the 71st year of his age, his tried spirit went to God.

The above sketch of Dr. Austin's life plainly indicates the prominent features of his character, as a man, a Christian, and a Christian minister. Obviously, he was no ordinary man. In person, mind, manners, moral culture and spiritual development, he was strongly marked. His proper individuality was never in danger of being mistaken for another's. A minute and extended analysis of so instructive a character would not suit the limits of this work; but both historical and moral justice require some notices like the following:

Above the usual height in person, he was erect and well-proportioned in form, manly and dignified in carriage. One could not look upon his features and mark his personal bearing, without feeling that more than an ordinary man was before him. His countenance was quick to receive impressions from the intellect and heart, and flash them outwards. His manners were dignified, yet simple; commanding, yet gentle and condescending. An appearance of austerity made a distant view of him stern and forbidding; but the nearer you drew to him, the more frank and affable you found him. Impertinence and undue familiarity shrunk abashed from his eye; but the smile he had for his friends, was as the sun-beam breaking through clouds.

The social element was largely developed in him. In

the domestic circle, although cares pressed heavily upon him from without, he was tender, considerate and assiduous. In the society of congenial friends, it was his delight to put off the harness of severe professional labor, and interchange thought and feeling in the freedom of unrestrained, fraternal intercourse. He could be cheerful, and yet not light; communicative, without uttering scandal or folly; familiar, and yet not undignified; and to the self-forgetfulness of unrestricted friendship, add the circumspection of a wise man and a Christian.

In respect of intellectual endowment, he was greatly favored. To use a homely phrase, "Nature had done much for him." But he was not satisfied with original gifts; he diligently improved them. Quick in perception, rapid and brilliant in his creations, with a sharp eye for analogies and a prompt response to the laws of association, he was admirably fitted for a public speaker. Nor was he deficient in analytical power and logical deduction. If a vivacious fancy sometimes became wild and rampant, reason was sure to reach after her, and either to bring her back or restrain her course. A comprehensive and rapid survey of a subject was congenial to his nature; and occasionally he might fail in minute investigation and nice criticism. Still, he reasoned with clearness and force on some of the higher themes of metaphysics and theology, and shewed himself able to grasp the noblest subjects of human thought. Rapid generalizations and the power of seizing at once on the most striking comparisons, gave to his speech unusual fluency, boldness and vigor. Not sufficiently attentive to his modes of utterance, he was at times redundant and dif-

fuse, and even negligent in his expressions.* But, in spite of such a drawback, a ready command of language enabled him to set forth a subject at times with transcendent power. His thoughts electric, electrified his hearers. In a word, liberally endowed by his Creator with the elements of intellectual power, he so cultivated his faculties, that he "is justly entitled to take a respectable rank among the learned men of our country," and so harmonized them in their development, that he was able to exercise an extraordinary influence over the minds of his fellow men.

But that which gave the highest excellence to Dr. Austin's character, and which makes his memory most fragrant now, was his piety. This was intelligent, earnest, affectionate and discriminating. Deeply affected with a view of his own sinfulness and lost condition, he had learned to trust with the most cordial reliance in the atonement of Christ for pardon and justification. With exalted conceptions of the greatness and holiness of God, he habitually humbled himself under His "mighty hand." "Resolved that, in every approach to the throne of the Most High, I will entertain and crowd into my mind as august conceptions as possible of the divine greatness, power, omnipresence, spirituality, omniscience, and infinite hatred of all sin and hypocrisy; and also, to annihilate myself, as it were, in His presence; that I may attend on prayer with becoming solemnity and devotion." The spirit of this resolution appears ever to have been with him; it breathed in his private devotions; it made his prayers remarkable in the public

* The opinion that he, in common with others at that day, considered style as of little or no importance, (See Am. Qu. Reg. Vol. IX. Article Dr. A.) is too sweeping and indiscriminate to be just.

assembly. "Even among the excellent, he excelled in *godly fear*. Greatly and most conscientiously afraid to offend God, and most desirous to please Him, he seemed strongly 'to love whatever God loves,' and as strongly to detest 'whatever He hates.' In the devotions of the family, as well as of the sanctuary and at the table of Christ, he very commonly appeared as though just within the vail, freely and with reverence addressing his Maker and Redeemer. Indeed, in this service, 'his heart seemed to expand and enlarge, and elevate all his views of divine things.' Highly ardent in the exercise and enjoyment of gracious affections, he was distinguished by that habitual heavenly-mindedness and spirituality, which indicated much devout meditation and a close walk with God. His were lofty spiritual aims, high attainments in the divine life, and ardent aspirations for the perfect likeness of Christ. He *walked with God, and was not: for God took him.*"*

The reader will now have been prepared for the statement, that Dr. Austin, not satisfied with low attainments either in knowledge or holiness, aimed at uniformity and consistency in his spiritual life. While he acknowledged that in many things he offended, and always assumed the attitude of profound humility as he confessed his sins before God, he yet panted after entire conformity to the divine will, and habitually aimed at completeness and harmony in the development of his spiritual nature. The unfortunate predisposition which untoward circumstances brought forth into a monomania of religious despondency, and which, thus developed, clouded the evening of his life, and obscured the sun as it set, should by no means lessen our appreciation of

* Dr. Tenney's discourse at the funeral of Dr. A.

the reality of a deep Christian experience and of uncommon excellence of character.

To a commanding personal appearance, courteous address, vigorous intellect, respectable erudition, knowledge of human nature, and sincere piety, you are now to add a temperament which gave energy to every motion, vivacity to every mental power, and ardor to every moral affection. What his hand found to do, he did with the concentrated force of a living soul. Opposition could not deter, nor ridicule turn him aside, when duty urged him onward. Loyalty to truth, devotion to duty, obedience to the right, let interest, or prejudice, or expediency oppose or flatter as they might—these were principles settled in the depths of his moral being, and, in the ardor of a sanguine temperament, giving character to a life which cannot be seen without interest, or studied without profit.

With the traits of character now distinguished, happily combined in the same person, we should be prepared to say, if we had never heard it, that Dr. Austin must have been remarkable as a preacher. Take him all in all, but few have excelled him; at any rate, we are safe in the conclusion, that, where one has risen above, tens and scores have fallen below him. We may not, indeed, claim for him the almost superhuman power of a Whitefield to entrance the multitudes, or the polished force of Robert Hall, or the resistless genius of Chalmers, or the massive strength of intellect that raised Edwards to a place among the half dozen elect of the race, or the versatility of Dwight, or the keen discrimination of Emmons; but no doubt intrudes upon us in saying that he was a 'workman that needed not to be ashamed.' The good providence of

God and his own endeavors prepared him to make the pulpit a place of power. Solemn and commanding in manner, with a soul awed before the majesty of God, he was a fit interpreter of the thunders of the law. Humble as a child before the mercy-seat, with all his hope of pardon on the cross of Christ, he could utter the accents of Calvary with subduing pathos. The tones of his voice resonant and flexible — now thrilling as the call of a clarion, and now liquid as the tones of a flute — his enunciation free, distinct and emphatic, he could pour forth the emotions of his surcharged heart with discriminating power — at one time with solemn grandeur to awe the thoughtless, and anon with the sweetness of hope and the melodies of love to cheer the desponding and comfort the broken-hearted. Always animated in the delivery of his thoughts, and throwing his soul into his subject with an utter forgetfulness of self, he not seldom carried his hearers captive to his own impassioned nature, and made their hearts give back throb for throb with his own. At times he uttered passages and produced impressions that a Hall or a Chalmers might have been proud of. No where was he more at home than in the pulpit; and there, though his preaching was so elevated in character and so effective in results, that he will ever be honored as an example to illustrate the power of pulpit oratory, yet it was in public prayer that he was most extraordinary of all. One who could judge intelligently, declared that in this respect he nearly resembled President Davies.* There are those now living who remember how he taught them to "draw nigh to God." He appeared to

* Qu. Reg. ix. 219.

wrestle with the angel of the covenant, until he prevailed. "His ardent soul seemed to take wing, and soar above the vanities of time, and mingle with the riches of eternity."*

That the portrait now drawn of this remarkable man is not overdrawn, that by this representation he is not misrepresented, may be shown in two ways: first, from the testimony of living witnesses, whose recollections of his presence and performances are still distinct and vivid; and secondly, from his writings. As you hear the former describe his manner in the pulpit, as you note the kindling of their eye and the animation imparted to their language while they tell you how he thrilled an audience with words of fire and hushed them to a solemn silence while pleading with God, you vainly wish that you could have seen and heard him for yourself. The sermons herewith submitted, will easily produce the impression, that he who could thus write, must have been no ordinary preacher. Add his voice, his emphasis, his speaking eye and his impassioned manner to these discourses, and you cannot doubt that his hearers must have felt the power and yielded to the spell of a master.

Save a few unimportant verbal alterations, the editor has ventured to make no change in either of the sermons. They are as they came from the pen of the writer. Some of his more effective passages were doubtless the suggestions of the moment made to his mind in the cumulative interest of delivery, and never were committed to paper.†

* Qu. Reg. ix. 219.

† "His preaching was unequal, but always sound in doctrine, often able, and in almost every sermon there were outbursts of surpassing eloquence."
Rev. Dr. Nelson.

Those flashings of genius, those bright spots of thought, those salient points of his oratory, those electric sparks direct from the overhanging cloud, cannot now be recalled or reproduced. When the presence of an audience began to animate him and the interest which he had kindled in others re-acted upon himself, it sometimes happened that what he had prepared in the study did not serve his purpose in the pulpit. At such times, after making one or two drafts upon the manuscript that were not answered, he would suddenly thrust it back upon the seat behind him, and then, borne himself upon the tide of a fresh inspiration, carry with him the willing multitudes who had surrendered themselves to his guidance.* Great as were his studied efforts, his unstudied bursts of eloquence were far more effective at the time, and are remembered now as seldom equaled in the ministrations of the pulpit. Thankful for what we have, it is natural to regret, though we may not complain, that we have not more.

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* Testimony of an eye-and-ear-witness.

THE

INCOMPARABLE EXCELLENCY OF RELIGION

AS THE

LIFE OF MAN:

A

SERMON,

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL AUSTIN, D. D.

NOTE.

This discourse was published in 1808. Having passed under its author's own revision, it is presumed to have met with his approval, both in respect of sentiment and style. Those who may not be able to assent to all its doctrines, or to recognize in it the highest style of sermon, will yet find in it thoughts of infinite moment, forcibly expressed.

SERMON.

DEUT. 32: 47.

For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life.

THESE are among the last words spoken by Moses the great lawgiver of Israel. They are a part of his valedictory address to them, which throughout is solemn and impressive. He had, in the foregoing passages of this address, given a short account of the marvelous interpositions of God in their behalf; mentioned several judgments which had overtaken them for their rebellions; recapitulated the most material laws which had been ordained for them to observe; pressed upon them obedience to those laws, and assured them of reaping a rich harvest of blessings in case they should walk dutifully with God, and of suffering the most dreadful effects of his displeasure if they should refuse to do so. In the verse before the text he brings his exhortation to a serious close. "And he said unto them, set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe, to do all the words of this law."

A very powerful motive he subjoins in the text. "For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life." Let us apply this, my hearers, to ourselves. Beyond all doubt

it will apply to us with as strict propriety, and to as great an extent as it did to the people of Israel. What Moses had enjoined was a strict and punctual observance of all the divine requirements. This is religion. Religion consists in obedience to God. The first great law, which is the rule of obedience to all intelligent creatures, is this: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." This law is comprehensive of all our duty as it respects our Creator. Love is the essence and the sum of it. He who loves God with all his heart will certainly worship him in the several ways, social and secret, in which he has directed us to approach him. He will reverence him deeply, be afraid of offending him, have the most sacred respect to his authority, teachably receive all his instructions, be cheerfully resigned to the disposals of his providence, unconditionally commit himself into his hands, and endeavor to employ all his faculties, and fill up all his time in serving him.

But this general law of love, as it extends to creatures in *our* circumstances, involves some particular duties. It binds us to repentance, faith and gratitude for that immensely rich salvation which the Gospel sets before us. These duties, binding on us as sinners, are most evidently comprehended in the general law, which requires us to acknowledge Jehovah as our God and to love him with all our hearts. If we possess this love to God, we shall certainly feel self-loathing for all our past undutiful treatment of him. We shall return from our apostacy, and take his part against ourselves. We shall cordially approve of the

law which condemns us, and adore the justice which is illustrated in the execution of that law. We shall embrace with joy an offended Saviour. For in proportion as this love reigns within us, Jesus and his work must be precious in our eyes. We shall bear without murmuring every affliction of life, as infinitely less than we deserve, and as necessary to fill up that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ. Our gratitude for so inestimable a favor as the salvation of which he is the author and finisher, will mingle itself with all our worship, and form the most elevated part of it.

In speaking of obedience to the requirements of God, as the sum of religion, we must not forget the second table of the law. This summarily requires that we love our neighbor as ourselves; i. e. that we regard his existence, improvement, and everlasting happiness, with the same friendly concern which we should feel for our own. This law is also obligatory upon all intelligent creatures. As it respects the condition of man, in a state of moral estrangement from God, it involves peculiar duties. It binds us to withdraw from all participation in the sins of wicked men, as a necessary expedient to bring them to repentance. It binds us to do all that we can, and to intercede in incessant humble prayer for their salvation. It binds us to rejoice in the conversion of those whom God is graciously pleased to bring out of darkness into his marvelous light; to take them to our bosoms as Christian brethren, and to seek their edification in holiness as preparatory to the bliss of heaven. It binds us to forbearance and forgiveness, and to all those condescending offices which benevolence dictates towards those whom we cannot recover to God and duty. This is

a general view of religion. To this the text has respect; not to the mere profession or form of it, not to any mere party interest, the frippery of ceremonies, or unhallowed zeal, formed in ignorance and bigotry, which may assume the name of religion. It has ever been the propensity of mankind to pass by the essence of religion, and to substitute in its stead observances which are the fruit of their own invention. It is pure and undefiled religion, extending its empire over the heart and over the faculties and actions of the man, free from all spurious intermixtures, which we are to have in view. Many people imagine that even this is a vain thing. They consider it as not worth any serious concern. But the Jewish lawgiver, speaking from experience, from the dictates of an enlightened understanding, and which is much more, from the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, has told us that it is not a vain thing. He has gone much farther, and asserted *that it is even our life.* I will now endeavor to illustrate and confirm to you the justness of this assertion. Life is the greatest temporal good enjoyed by man. The termination of it is ordinarily considered as the greatest evil. All worldly possessions take their departure with the extinction of life. The malicious destruction of it is estimated as the greatest crime, and the taking it away in the execution of law is deemed the highest kind of punishment. The term life, as used in the text, has certainly not a confined respect to things merely temporal. It reaches to all the concerns of man, and must be considered as comprehending whatever is, or ought to be valuable to him here and hereafter. To illustrate the justness of the assertion in its proper and extensive sense, I would observe—

1. That without religion our natural life, with all its attendant enjoyments, is forfeited; and so forfeited that we have no right to calculate upon its continuance, and that it cannot indeed be continued, but as the result of mere long-suffering in God. All creatures, who hold their existence in a state of favor and happiness, have it continued to them either on the ground of their personal obedience, or by a dispensation of grace. There are but these two ways. No other is possible. The infinitely good God cannot but approve the characters, and delight in the persons of all obedient creatures. He will certainly secure their happiness in union with himself so long as they remain obedient. The language of God's government with respect to the obedient, is "he that doeth them, shall live in them." No evil can befall a creature so long as he remains friendly to his Creator. Sin is a revolt from him. It places the creature in a state of rebellion, and under the curse of the law. For the unalterable language of the law, is "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Life is forfeited by sin. And when life is forfeited, all its attendant privileges and enjoyments are forfeited.

The other principle on which creatures may hold a happy existence in union with God, is grace. These are properly two distinct covenants. He who has broken the covenant of mere law, or works, may become interested in a new covenant, called the covenant of grace. Such a covenant God has revealed and proposed to man. It is in the hand of Christ as its mediator or executor, and is sealed by his blood. It constitutes the substance of that revelation with which God has been pleased to enrich us. But the sinner cannot be interested in the new covenant while ut-

terly destitute of religion. The covenant takes effect by the consent of the sinner only. This consent must comprehend repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He who does not repent, remains a rebel. He continues in arms against his lawful sovereign. He spurns every persuasion which invites him to be reconciled, and tramples upon the provisions of grace. He has, then, no title to his natural life, or to any of its enjoyments, by his personal obedience or by grace. His life is continued on the same principle that the life of a murderer is continued in the proceedings of a civil government, after he has been tried, convicted, and the sentence of death has been pronounced against him. It is continued in mere forbearance. Were all irreligious people struck dead in a moment, they would only be treated according to their real moral condition. This is exactly the reverse of the state of religious people. They, as much as the irreligious, have broken the law; and, personally considered, deserve to have life and all its enjoyments taken from them. But they have repented, and embraced the new covenant. They are subjects of grace, and are interested in the promises of grace. These promises secure to them a protraction of life, so long as it shall be for their real benefit, and in connection with it, the continuance of every desirable enjoyment.

2. Without religion, a person cannot be a subject of any blessing. His organs, and health and activity of body, and his faculties of mind, may be continued unimpaired, but they cannot be continued as blessings. With plenty his cup may overflow, but it cannot be as a blessing. These things are favors in providence which call for grati-

tude, as they illustrate the excellency of Jehovah's character, are the opposite of what the sinner deserves, and are so many talents which may be put to dutiful use. But they do not indicate an interest in the blessing, any more than if the recipient were all the while suffering the miseries of the damned. A malefactor under sentence of death, may have his execution respited, but the reprieve will not indicate that the government means to treat him at all as an object of its smiles. He may be fed, comfortably lodged, and have every want supplied; but none of these things will express any satisfaction in his character. They are consistent with a perfect detestation of it, and a resolution not to mitigate upon the whole, in the least, the severity of his punishment.

Those receive gifts from God as real blessings, and those only, who are personally *the blessed*. All blessings descend upon men by the new covenant. The curse only comes by the old. They only are the blessed who embrace the covenant in which the blessings are deposited. Abraham embraced this covenant. God, of course, was Abraham's covenant God. Hence God said to him, "In blessing, I will bless thee." God was the covenant God of Abraham's seed. They in succession are actual recipients of the covevant. Hence they are said to be "the seed which the Lord hath blessed." Converts from the Gentile world, are Abraham's seed by adoption. They are brought into the same covenant, and become, equally with Abraham himself, objects of the blessing. For says Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." It is on

this principle that the detail of blessings was given by Moses to the people of Israel, as recorded in the 28th ch. Deut. "And it shall come to pass if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall command his blessings upon thee in thy store-houses, and in all thou settest thine hand unto, and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." In similar language the Psalmist declares, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." The prophet inculcates the same sentiment. "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." This evidence may be sufficient to conclude that the blessing is appropriate to those who are subjects of religion. But I cannot suppress the emphatic benedictions pronounced by our Saviour, in the beginning of his sermon on the mount. "Blessed are

the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." The Christian here is designated in the governing affections of his heart, and the leading traits of his character. On him, therefore, the blessing rests, and on him only. The unbelieving sinner does not receive it, says the Psalmist. "The ungodly are not so, but are as the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." The favors which the wicked receive do not come in a covenant channel. They testify to no union between God and them. They are not pledges of fatherly love, as those are which are conferred upon the pious. They present no evidence that God designs their good. They may be merely a savor of death unto death. They may contribute only to hasten and augment their final destruction. For "when the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed forever." Which leads me to observe—

3. That he who is destitute of religion is subjected to the positive curse of God's law. This curse rests upon him at all times, and however employed, and it attaches to all he does, possesses and enjoys. The curse is the reverse of the blessing. It is the portion of the sinner's cup. It

expresses the abhorrence God entertains of his character. Being under the law, he is necessarily under the curse. "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." In the chapter in Deut., where the blessing has been quoted, we find the curse following the rebellious, and never leaving them till they are finally destroyed. "But it shall come to pass, if thou shalt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments, and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee: cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field: cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation and rebuke, in all that thou puttest thine hand unto for to do, until thou perish quickly." "Cursed" says the prophet, "is the man who trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." The New Testament speaks in language equally strong to this purpose; nay, much more alarming. He who believeth not is declared to be condemned already. The wrath of God is said to abide on him. Expressions of terror are multiplied, as if it were difficult to find words sufficiently significant to convey a just idea of the weight of that curse which rests upon the irreligious. "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, upon the Jew first, and also upon the Gentile." Thus the curse goes side by side with the blessing. As sure as

the latter rests upon the religious, the former rests upon those of an opposite character. It fastens upon them immovably. It is a burden which, when eternity pours its light upon their minds, they will not be able to bear. It will sink them to the depths of wretchedness. To have the wrath of the immutable Jehovah abide upon a defenceless creature, for a million of years, would be dreadful. Who could support the thought of only having his finger held in the flame of a candle for so long a period? What a doom, deeply to be deprecated, to be condemned with Dives, even for this period, to sigh out the mournful complaint, "I am tormented in this flame." But the everlasting continuance of this distress is the thing which adds a thousand-fold to the horrors of it. From this curse religion delivers us. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Invaluable possession! Indeed it is our life.

4. Religion is our life, as it is the only thing which can make us morally and spiritually what we ought to be. There is a death, my brethren, which is spiritual, as well as a death which is natural and eternal; I mean the soul's bereavement of the moral image of God, its destitution of that love which his law requires, and its voluntary bondage to sin and Satan. "To be carnally minded," the apostle tells us, "is death." "You hath he quickened," again he observes, "who were dead in trespasses and sins." He who lives in pleasure is said to be dead while he liveth. The moral recovery of the soul to God is denominated, on the other hand, life. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." A restoration to such a life is what is intended by the term,

" quickened." This language of Scripture proves to us that without religion the soul of man is wholly dead in sin. It has no shade of likeness to the moral excellency of the Deity remaining. It is not only without moral beauty, but is degraded down to a positive resemblance of the arch-adversary of God. View a creature entirely divested of all conformity to the two great commandments which require love to God and our neighbor, at enmity with an infinite being whose nature is love, refusing to be reconciled to him, trampling on his authority, turning a deaf ear to his counsels, going forward with an unconquerable obstinacy in sinning against him, spurning his grace, combined with other enemies against his throne and glory, resisting the efforts of the pious, and strengthening the hands of those who hate them, and you certainly have in your minds a creature dead to all moral right. Deep stupidity and moral blindness are the ordinary concomitants of this spiritual death. The heart being totally vitiated, so vitiated as to love darkness rather than light, there is a proneness in man to error and deception. There is an indisposition even to attend with any teachableness to the things which belong to his everlasting peace. " O," said the Saviour when he wept over Jerusalem, " that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes." And the prophet Jeremiah asks, " To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear ? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, that they cannot hearken. The word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it." If possible, the picture which Paul draws, of the blindness of sinners, is still more frightful. " This I say therefore and testify,

that ye walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to work all uncleanness with greediness." Religion is the resurrection of the creature from this death in sin. It is the putting off of this body of ignorance and deformity, and putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. From the nature of religion, as it has been generally described in the forepart of this discourse, it must appear to be the proper restoration of the sinner, to all moral rectitude. This constitutes real moral excellence. It harmonizes the creature with the Creator, and disposes him to be active in his service. It rescues him from self-imposition, blindness and error. He presents his body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. Under the influence of it, as the great spring of real improvement, he employs his intellectual powers in diligent and successful search after truth. His eye being single, his whole body is full of light. His exertions are directed to the best things.

Many have been the endeavors of mankind to form excellence and usefulness of character without religion. Great has been the labor to make man a virtuous and amiable being, on some other principle. External purifications have been resorted to. Acts of corporeal worship have been multiplied. Men have gone on pilgrimages, and sunk into cloisters. A heartless morality, shaped according to the superficial opinions of the world, has been cherished, as though it attached real moral worth to man. The princi-

ple of honor has been embraced. And the rebel against Jehovah has approached to single combat in defence of his character, as though he had some worth of character which he might lose. These are miserable expedients to shift off religion, and confirm that darkness of mind in which unconverted men love to be bewildered. It is labor wholly in vain. Religion is the only thing which can constitute true worth of character, and give man a rank among morally living creatures.

5. Religion is our life, as it brings with it inestimably precious personal comforts through the changes of this mortal state, secures a peaceful departure out of the world, and gives at last an abundant entrance into the mansions of the blessed. Religion disengages from those exertions which perpetually harrass worldly men. It calms down the anxieties of the mind, dissipates its fears, and reconciles it to adversity. It leads the possessor of it to a sweet reliance upon an all-sufficient Saviour. It gladdens the soul with the aspiring hope which fastens upon the skies ; which is its anchor sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail. It is its glory so to belittle the world as to detect its cheats, and despise its unholy acquisitions of honor, profit and pleasure. It is its glory to put the malice of earth and hell at defiance, and to vanquish the king of terrors. It is crowned with a part in the first resurrection, and brings its most happy, its highly honored subject up to the blissful seats of paradise. And O, the unutterable triumphs, the unsatiating, ever expanding raptures it will then enkindle ! Go, follow the irreligious man down to his dark and dreary prison below, witness his agonies, hear his moans, think of his being continued this spectacle

of shame and misery through interminable ages; and then follow the religious man up to the pearly gates of heaven. See them thrown wide open for his honorable admittance. Behold congratulating angels and saints welcoming him to a participation in their joys. Witness the transports of his soul when his eye is fastened upon his adored Saviour. Mark with what ecstasy he mingles his song of victory with the acclamations of all the ransomed, and let this felicity be drawn out in your imaginations to an endless eternity, and you will have some idea, but O, how inadequate, of the extent to which it is true, that religion is our life. Upon the whole, it is impossible to name one real personal good, one attainment or enjoyment of real value, which is not religion itself, or founded in it. Without it, the richer a man is in worldly possessions, the poorer he certainly is upon the whole. The more honorable he is in worldly distinctions, the more dishonor attaches to him upon the whole. The more unholy pleasure he enjoys, the more bitterness is he certainly laying up for himself in the latter end. The more he is flattered here, the more will his torments be increased by the revilings of his companions in hell at last. If possible it would be better to be a child of penury in the very lowest grade of human existence, and infinitely better to be a beast, driven by goads, and bearing a yoke, than be a man, even a man of eminence and figure, without religion. But I am constrained to observe once more,

6. That religion is our life in *social* respects. What an unamiable and unpleasant, not to say wretched society, is an irreligious family. The term wretched, in the strict sense of it, applies to millions of families, from the mere want of religion. A perpetual infraction of each other's

rights, jealousies, criminations and jars, make up the materials of their history. If there are any enjoyments resulting from family affinities without religion, they rise no higher in their nature, than those of all animals who live in clusters; and they are counterbalanced by severe sorrows under adversities and bereavements, of which they are the spring. Religion gives to domestic society, all its real value, its innocence, its mutual confidence, its cheerfulness, its unity of interest, its harmony of sentiment, and its aspiring hopes. The endearments indulged neither satiate nor embitter on reflection. Enlivening conversation on the best subjects, presents a miniature of heaven. Trust in God dispels anxiety and gloom. Anticipations of a happy meeting in heaven, remove the dreariness of that dissolution of their family state which they know is hastening on. Praise ascends from the family altar, and the voice of an approving God supports and gladdens in the parting scene.

It is religion only, which is the basis of Christian communion, and the life of that most desirable society, called the church. Here how friendly, how inviting it is! How tender are its sympathies, how abundant are its labors for the general edification, how free are its charities, how brotherly its spirit, how harmonious its songs, and how elevated its joys! Here none are strangers, none are partizans. All are brethren. The rich and the poor, the high and the low, the free and the bond are on a level. All are members of the same body. And though they have never seen each other, and live under different political governments, in a state of open war, they feel the uniting attractive influence of one common affection. If it were left to

them, there would be no war, no rapine, no oppression one of another. They can be in the most perfect amity with each other, while the world is rent with national hatreds. This is a fact at the present moment. When the nations of Europe are sending out their armies and fleets, and exhausting their resources for each other's destruction, while lands are covered, and oceans are stained with human gore, the remnant of the followers of Jesus dispersed over the respective countries, are pouring their affectionate condolence into each other's bosoms, drawing tighter the cords of their mutual charities, contributing to each other's relief, meeting before the same throne of grace, and combining their efforts to heal the moral disorders of mankind, and spread the Gospel over the world. Ye amiable people! Ye are entitled to be called the elect of God. Ye are as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. Ye seem feeble and forgotten; and many of you are persecuted. But ye are brethren, and yours finally is the victory, and the glory. When, my hearers, religion has accomplished its end, into what a transcendently glorious society will it form the Christian Church.

It would be doing religion an infinite injury to suppose, that it is the principle on which political society is founded. A political society is a collection of men nationally separated from the rest of the world. Its form of government is not generally *chosen*, but the fruit of accident, or imposed. It has respect merely to the interests of the world, and will perish with the world. To say that such a society cannot exist in a state of prosperity, without religion, if by prosperous state be meant national aggrandizement and opulence, is to assert against all evidence. Yet it may be

averred, that religion has the most propitious influence on political society. It makes the good magistrate, and the industrious, quiet subject. It gives to contracts their best security, and to labor its sure reward. As it spreads among the mass of a people, crimes will cease, mutual confidence will be restored, order will prevail, and each one will sit under his vine and fig-tree, having none to make him afraid.

As a farther evidence of the excellence of religion, I must be permitted to remark, that nearly all those establishments which have charity for their object—seminaries of learning, hospitals of every description, societies for the relief of persons in distress, for the recovery of those who have become the victims of seduction, and for the emancipation of slaves, have sprung from religion as their creative principle.

Thus religion, heaven-descended, the image of the Creator, and the sure guide to that happiness which is to be enjoyed in His love, scatters her bounties, spreads her lights and extends her healing influence in every direction. It is just the opposite of being a vain thing. It is the only object entitled to our care. To be religious, is to be wise and right, useful and happy. To be without religion, is to be desperately wicked. It is to be a cumberer of the ground and an heir of hell.

Shall we not then, my hearers, be grieved to the heart for all our past irreligiousness? Shall we not lament our opposition to religion, and neglect of it? Shall we not yield to its demands, come home to God, and be his forever? Can we still go so directly in the face of evidence, law, authority and experience, as to refuse to be religious?

Are we determined never to be what we ought to be? Are we resolved to bring shame, dishonor and perdition upon ourselves as fast as possible? Can we continue deliberately to prefer a portion with the wicked? If exhortations could do any thing, they should be multiplied till evening; till I sunk down lifeless in the pulpit. And it would be a most desirable death. But if you yield dutifully, it must be to evidence. Evidence is full before you. And with you I leave it, and with Him, who shall judge the quick and the dead. Amen.

THE

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF SAVING GRACE,

A

POWERFUL TESTIMONY TO THE TRUTH

OF

DIVINE REVELATION:

A SERMON,

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL AUSTIN, D. D.

NOTE.

The following sermon has never before been published. It was written in 1803, when the author was in the unimpaired vigor of his manhood. He doubtless regarded it as one of his most valuable sermons. The reason for this statement is, that, besides preaching it to his own people, he delivered it in Berlin and Hadley, in Paxton, Sutton and Newport. It may not be needful, yet let it not be deemed impertinent, to apprize the reader, that he will easily find in the discourse bold thoughts, sharply defined, tersely and forcibly expressed.

SERMON.

I JOHN 5 : 10.

He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.

EVER since the establishment of Christianity, it has been a matter of warm and extensive debate, whether it be a system derived from God. Jews and Mahometans, Pagans and Deists have united in rejecting the affirmative of this question. They have regarded the Gospel as a false and fabulous imposition on the credulity of mankind. Some of them have been men of great learning, and have published treatises, written with ingenuity and great confidence of success, against the authority of the Bible. These champions of infidelity have increased very fast, and become exceedingly bold and impudent, in our day.* A large

* It will be recollected that Dr. Dwight's two Discourses on the nature and danger of Infidel Philosophy were published just before this period. "At the time of his accession to the presidency [of Yale], infidelity was prevalent and fashionable in the College. To extirpate a spirit so pernicious and fatal, he availed himself of an early and decisive opportunity. Forensic disputation was an important exercise of the senior class. For this purpose they were formed into a convenient number of divisions; two of which disputed before him every week, in the presence of the other members of the class, and of the resident graduates. It was the practice for each division to agree upon several questions, and then refer them to the President to select which

portion of the inhabitants of Christian countries there are besides, who are *practical* unbelievers. They have never examined the subject of the truth of Christianity with that closeness of attention which has fixed them decidedly in the number of Deists; yet they remain in doubt. Christianity may, or may not be true. In their minds, this is a question of great uncertainty.

To counteract the poison of infidelity, and fix a conviction of the truth of Christianity in the minds of the unsettled and wavering, a multitude of ingenious treatises have been written and published, and the abundant evidence which there is on the face of the Bible itself, in the testimony of

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he thought proper. At that time infidelity was extensively prevalent in the state, and in the country; and an impression existed generally among the students, that Christianity was supported by authority, and not by argument; and that their instructors were afraid to investigate the question respecting the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, in the field of open and fair discussion. One of the questions presented by the first division was this:—'*Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the Word of God?*' To their surprise the President selected this for discussion; told them to write on which side they pleased, as he should not impute to them any sentiments which they advanced as their own; and requested those who should write on the negative side of the question to collect and bring forward all the facts and arguments which they could produce; enjoining it upon them, however, to treat the subject with becoming respect and reverence. Most, if not all the members of the division came forward as the champions of infidelity. When they had finished the discussion, he first examined the ground they had taken; triumphantly refuted their arguments; proved to them that their statement of facts was mistaken or irrelevent; and, to their astonishment, convinced them that their acquaintance with the subject was wholly superficial. After this, he entered into a direct defence of the divine origin of Christianity, in a strain of powerful argument, and animated eloquence, which nothing could resist. The effect upon the students was electrical. From that moment, infidelity was not only without a strong-hold, but without a lurking place. To espouse her cause now was as unpopular as before it had been to profess a belief in Christianity. Unable to endure the exposure of argument, she fled from the retreats of learning, ashamed and disgraced." *Life of President Dwight, prefixed to his system of Theology.*

ancient writers, and in past and present events, has been collected and presented to view with the strongest force of argument. These labors of learned men in defence of Christianity, have been extensively useful; have contributed as means in the hand of God, to confirm the minds of millions in belief of the truth of the Christian religion.

But there is another species of evidence, not comprehensible by the blinded understandings of natural men, which is entirely beyond all the attacks of wit and learning, and which, to him who possesses it, is as conclusive as mathematical demonstration. Other arguments are very strong; but this is so powerful as utterly to banish doubt, if any had previously existed. It is the evidence of experience; and is suggested in the passage which I have read to you for my text. "He that believeth on the Son of God, *hath the witness in himself*." There is in persons who have experienced the efficacy of the Gospel in the renovation and sanctification of their own souls, a testimony to the truth of Christianity, arising out of their personal experience, which is so strong and convincing that it may with propriety be called *the witness*. It is so strong as to make every other species of evidence to them almost superfluous. It must be agreeable to the feelings of real Christians, and may be materially beneficial to all others who are disposed to attend to the subject, for me *to state, as clearly as I can, the nature of this evidence, and to show wherein it consists*. This is the object I have in view in the use of the passage before us.

I. But first, to prevent obscurity, it seems necessary to ascertain who is intended by a believer on the Son of God. There is a false, as well as a true faith. Some imagine

that they believe in Christ, when their lives demonstrate that they never knew what it is truly to believe in Him. Some are believers in Christ by the mere force of tradition. They would have believed in Mahomet, or Confucius, or any heathen deity just as strongly, if they had been born in a Mahometan or heathenish country. They imbibed notions in favor of Christianity in the progress of their infant and youthful years. These were matured into opinions by domestic and school education. They have been in the habit of attending public worship. They have heard no other religion inculcated as the true religion. On the contrary, they have heard every other form of religion reprobated as false. As the effect of such instructions and habits, they have in general a prevailing belief, that Jesus is the Son of God, and that the Gospel is true. They still live, however, under the government of sinful propensities, and have no adequate views of the nature of the Gospel scheme or true moral connection with the blessed Redeemer, more than if they had been brought up among the most savage nations. Persons who believe thus, as the effect of educational influence only, are not such as believe to the saving of the soul. Indeed it is true of them generally, that they oppose the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and with most ungrateful contempt reject that Saviour in whom they profess to believe.

Others have simply an intellectual belief in Christ. They have a faith which is something more than merely educational influence, which, however, is only speculative, and altogether short of the faith of God's elect. Being naturally of an inquisitive and studious turn of mind, they have gone farther than mere education led them. They have

thought, read and heard, till their understandings are pretty firmly established in the belief that the Gospel is what it professes to be,—the word of God, and that its fundamental doctrines are realities. But their faith is no other than that which they profess with respect to many persons, places, testimonies and facts which are not spoken of in the Gospel. It is the same faith with which they believe there was such a person as Mahomet, and is such a place as Rome. It is a faith which respects the understanding only, and leaves the heart as dead to all moral objects as is the heart of a Deist, or a heathen. Such persons are not believers, in the sense of the Gospel. They are unbelievers; and that with greater guilt than others who are less instructed. They daringly rebel against the dictates of their own understandings and consciences.

Others are believers [so to speak] feelingly, who yet are not believers on the Son of God, in the sense of the text. Their feelings are much exercised about Christ, and they really think that they believe on Him with the heart, but are altogether deceived. Their hearts are exercised in what they call a believing reliance upon Christ, through merely natural principles, or the workings of selfish affection, under mistaken views of the nature of the Gospel, and on the ground of some fundamental error which they have imbibed. Their passions have been wrought upon perhaps under some pathetic delineation of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, or while reading the account which the Scriptures give of His death. They have been affected just on the same principles that they would have been under the hearing of some affecting parts of a tragedy, or if similar sufferings of any other person had been presented with equal

force to their imaginations. Such affections they imagine, are clear evidence that they do possess real faith in the Redeemer. They wish to be happy in eternity, as well as in time. They are convinced that happiness cannot be obtained but somehow in connection with Christ. Being perhaps under some awakening influences of the Holy Spirit, they feel interested in the subject. They are greatly exercised about their souls; and, because they are so, conclude that they believe in Christ scripturally and savingly. But however high our exercises of soul may rise, however much our thoughts may be employed, and our affections engaged about Jesus Christ, if, in all these, our chief concern is to escape eternal misery, or to enjoy some benefit merely personal, it is plain that we are as carnal in our religion, as we were before in our sensual pursuits. Hence, it is generally true, that such persons, if they arrive at a pretty strong hope, and especially if they have great confidence, and what they call assurance of their safe and happy state, sink down into carelessness, and live lives of general barrenness and stupidity.

He who truly and savingly believes on the Son of God, does so, as the effect of a real change of heart. For faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit. He has, at least generally speaking, correct views of himself, of the law of God, of the Gospel doctrines and plan of salvation, of the nature of that salvation, of the character of Christ and the mediatorial offices He sustains; and not only believes the Gospel in all its parts to be true, but his heart is reconciled, so that with strong affection to Christ, in view of what He is in Himself, and in view of the spiritual and holy nature of His salvation, he embraces Him, rests upon Him, lives upon

Him, cleaves to Him, and follows Him in the spirituality of an habitual devotion, and the self-denial of a holy conversation. Real love to Christ for what He is in Himself, is the governing affection of his soul, and this love stronger than death, leads him to count all things else but as loss and dross in comparison with the excellency of the knowledge of His name. Such believers were the apostles; and such believers are all they who will be saved. It is of such persons only,—true, experimental believers, that the assertion of the text holds. We will consider

II. The reality and nature of that evidence which true believers, on the basis of their own experience, have of the truth of the Christian religion. If a man from a state of stupidity and unbelief becomes a miracle to himself as a changed man, as great a miracle as any that are recorded in the Scriptures; if by some kind of light which had never before shone into his mind, and in the exercise of feelings to which he had heretofore been an utter stranger, he should find facts in his own experience exactly coincident with the scripture doctrines and representations; if he should find the work of salvation actually carried on in his own soul, exactly in agreement with the theory of the Bible, and so that he knew it to be wholly supernatural—he having not contributed to it a single iota, it is plain that he would have evidence of the truth of the Christian scheme which he would be wholly incapable of resisting. All this is precisely true of every one that is born of God.

1. The true believer is the subject of a *supernatural** *illumination*, which proves to him fully that the scripture

* Not strictly miraculous, or contradicting the laws of nature, but above nature, altogether superior to any thing which the natural man perceives. Ed.

doctrine of the apostasy of man, his total blindness to spiritual things, his opposition to the character, law, government and service of God, his stupidity, devotion to sense, and unwillingness to be reconciled and saved, are true, because they agree to what he has found to be fact in himself. It is a doctrine of the Scriptures, that man is totally apostatized from God, and sunk into spiritual idolatry. "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, which can hold no water." It is a scripture doctrine that men in this state of apostasy are altogether blind to spiritual things. "Ye were darkness." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is a doctrine of the Scriptures, that men in this state of apostasy are beyond all expression spiritually stupid. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." It is a doctrine of the Bible, that man in this state is not only destitute of all true holiness, but positively inimical to God and His law. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to His law, neither indeed can be." It is a scriptural doctrine, that men in their natural state hate the light, contemn the Gospel, and though invited, utterly refuse to come to Christ for life. "This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." It is also a scriptural doctrine, that some men in distinction from others, are the subjects of a preternatural illumination of

mind; the effect of which is a discovery and full acknowledgment of the facts as thus distinctly set forth. God declares by the prophets that he would search Jerusalem with *candles*, and that He would cause the wicked to *know* their abominations. Christ tells His disciples that after He was gone, He would send the Comforter into the world, and that He should be a powerful agent upon the minds of men, to *convince* them *of sin*. Under His accompanying agency, the weapons of truth with which the apostles attacked the kingdom of the devil, are said to have been mighty to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. And the word is declared to be 'quick and powerful, a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' The effect of this illumination of the mind which takes place in some sinners under the agency of the Holy Spirit, is declared to be a decided conviction, that they personally are as benighted, stupid, depraved, and indisposed to come to Christ,—as completely lost, as the Scriptures represent them to be. "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations." Accordingly, it is found that such have been precisely the effects of supernatural illumination in respect of every true believer, from the first example of conversion to the last. Such was the effect on Job. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." A similar result was seen in the case of David. It was something more than the sound of the words, "thou art the man," pointed as

they were, which stung David's heart, and made him sink down, monarch as he was, under the confession, "I have sinned," and which was followed with such plaintive strains as we find in the fifty-first Psalm. Such was the effect on the multitude under the first Gospel sermon that was preached after the ascension of Jesus. "And when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'" Such was the case with the jailer. What overwhelming conviction of guilt that must have been which extorted from him that earnest inquiry, addressed to his despised and apparently wretched prisoners, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' And, to name no more, such in a very clear and striking manner was the case with that eminent monument of grace—the apostle Paul. "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."

Are not similar events taking place in thousands of instances at the present day? Will any man deny, that there are in the Christian Church now a multitude of believers as sincere and as real as was the apostle Paul? If there be, they have undoubtedly become believers in the same manner and on the same grounds. These were all once as stupid, unbelieving, inimical to God, hardened, and averse to admitting the doctrines of the Gospel and coming to Christ for salvation, as those who now remain in their stupidity. *Now* they feel differently; they act differently; they speak an entirely new language. Now they see themselves to be, and acknowledge that they are of just such a spirit and character as the Scriptures represent them to be —as guilty, as lost, in as perishing need of Christ. This

right acknowledgment is the result of a preternatural illumination, of which they have been the subjects. This must be the case, because we know that all men are naturally averse to entertaining such a view of themselves. It is wholly opposed to their self-love. They do not wish to find these things to be true of them, but delight in every thing which is flattering to themselves. The murderer does not wish to see himself to be guilty—to see the atrociousness of his conduct, and his proper desert of punishment. He does not seek conviction ; he strives against it. He strives to entertain the best view of himself that he can. If he is convicted, it must be through the light which is forced upon his mind from some extraneous source. Why is it that the man who was yesterday stupid and unfeeling, as though he had never done any thing wrong, is trembling like Belshazzar to-day ? This alteration must be the effect of some preternatural illumination of which his mind has become the subject. This illumination when it powerfully spreads itself over the mind of a sinner, operates like the light of a burning lamp brought into a dark and filthy room. Till the lamp is introduced, the impurity of the room is not seen. The person, who sits in it, knows not but that it is clean ; but as soon as the light is introduced, the filthiness instantly appears. Just so, when light is cast into the mind of a sinner, by the Holy Ghost, impressing a sense of God, showing him what is holy, right and obligatory, he instantly sees the moral impurity of his own soul. Now he appears to be just the opposite of what he supposed, full of deformity, hateful, guilty, lost. His heart he finds just as strongly opposed to God, as the Scriptures represent it to be. His whole course of life he now sees to

be just as unholy and unclean, as the Scriptures represent that of every sinner to be. His principles of action, thoughts, propensities, unbelief, stupidity, and stubbornness, the mischievous influence of all his ways upon the souls of others, his dependence on sovereign mercy and infinite need of a Saviour, now appear to be precisely in accordance with the teachings of the Bible. That holy book is a glass in which he can see his true character and state. Its language is now no longer false, unmeaning, or vain, but eternal truth respecting himself at least; and, as he sees all men naturally to be in his condition, respecting them also. Now the Bible is invested with authority. It contains, as is clearly perceived, the indictment of a being who searches every heart, knows all things, and cannot be deceived. It is indeed so. The sinner is forced to say, "What evidence that this book is the word of God. Who but God could so perfectly know my heart, or reveal it? What other being could give such a perfect picture of it? How perfectly do my present views and feelings correspond with what the Scriptures speak of as the effect of a special illumination. How irresistibly does this add to the proof of their divinity. Whence is it that I have been brought to this stand, and to view myself in so new a light—a light which has been and which still is so unwelcome? I have not sought for it. It has come upon me, without any will of my own. I can no more get rid of it than I can of my being. How exposed I am to hell, just as the Bible represents. How absolutely certain it is that there must be a hell for just such rebels as I am, and how evident is this part of the Gospel scheme, which has hitherto been the chief ground of my disbelief of its truth." We will now proceed to consider

2. The experience of the believer in the event of his conversion. Illumination of mind in the true believer reaches farther than mere conviction, though we have hitherto considered it only in that light. It is not true that every one who is brought under deep conviction of sin, is savingly converted. Conviction is one thing; real conversion another. A person may be a subject of the former, and yet be lost. The latter, securing salvation, is radically different from the former and altogether superior to it. This is precisely accordant with the experience of the true believer. When really converted to God, he is, as it were, taken by surprise. He finds it to be something of which he before had no distinct idea. He is in possession of something which he had never truly sought. He is led in a path which he never had entered before, nor had ever seen. He finds himself under an influence which he had never felt before, or at least, to be the subject of views and feelings which are as new as if he had been translated into another world. That God to whom he had felt such aversion before, for the very same reason which was the ground of this aversion, appears now to be invested with an infinite glory and beauty. His glory appears to be shed over all His works of creation, providence and redemption. His government is glorious, and glory gilds the pages of the sacred volume. Now the desirableness of being holy is seen and felt. Now it is easy to repent, submit, believe, and rejoice in God. The burden which was upon the mind before, is now gone; darkness is all dissipated; doubts are scattered; difficulties are removed; doctrines are reconciled. The people of God appear in a new and amiable light, and so does religion in all its duties, motives, and in-

terests. He finds himself now strangely dead to worldly objects, to which before he was strongly attached. Even bodily appetites which it might have seemed to him before he could not overcome, are now mortified seemingly without any effort. This general representation of the views and feelings which are experienced by real believers, in the event of their conversion, is agreeable to the Scriptures, and also to those numerous narratives which are before the public in which individuals have stated their experience in this respect. In some, the work of conversion is more striking and obvious, than in others. But the same general things are experienced by all, though not with equal clearness. Now if it be allowed that any man does pass through so great a change in his views, tastes and the feelings of his heart with respect to all moral objects, it is very evident that it must be attended in his own mind with very indubitable proof that the Bible is assuredly the word of God. For in his conversion he recognizes almost every leading doctrine of the Gospel confirmed by fact. Now, having spiritual senses to discern spiritual things, having by a kind of resurrection quitted his hold of carnal, and embraced spiritual objects, the spirituality of God's holy kingdom is, as it were, unvailed to him, events and institutions recorded in the Scriptures, which were before incredible to him, are now explained in their spirituality and connection with the wonderful work of redemption. In his conversion, he has a discovery of the total moral deadness of man by nature which he never had before, and the correctness with which the Scriptures speak on this subject confirms to him their divine authority.. The scripture doctrine of the new birth, and all the particular detached records which are found in

the Scriptures of events of this nature, are set forth in the light of his own experience as unquestionable realities. In his conversion, he recognized such a God, and such a universal agency of God as the Scriptures describe. He is conscious of evident effects of His power. The language of the Bible is, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." In the change he has experienced he recognizes this power. As a converted creature, he finds himself as evidently the effect of power, as he is animally or intellectually. Being absolutely a new creature and brought to views and feelings of which he had not even an idea before, he is, in this light, as much a proof to himself of the reality of the operation of divine power in the conversion of sinners and saving them from death, as he can discern in its operation in the works of creation. In his conversion he finds himself to be a miracle as great, for aught that he can see, as any recorded in the Scriptures. The whole scripture account therefore of miracles is rendered entirely credible, and their force in demonstrating the divine authority of scripture testimony is clearly perceived. In his conversion, he recognizes also a wonderful accomplishment of scriptural prediction. The passage which I have just quoted to introduce the idea of the action of divine power in the conversion of sinners, is a prediction. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Many others there are corresponding with it. Such a one is that in the prophet Ezekiel. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. And a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh,

and I will give you a heart of flesh." Of these predictions, which could have come from no other being but that glorious God who has all future events in His hand, and under His eye, he finds an unexpected and admirable fulfillment in his own experience. How then must the authority of the Scriptures be ratified to him on this ground.

Farther; in the experience of conversion, the believer recognized the scripture doctrine of divine sovereignty. If any sinners are saved, they must certainly be saved by God; He only is competent to this mighty work. The language of absolute sovereignty is proper to God. It is such a language as He must hold forth in a revelation of Himself to sinners. Accordingly we find this language incorporated into the whole body of the Scriptures. In the Old Testament and in the New, He declares, "I am God, and besides me there is none else; and besides me there is no Saviour." "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and compassion on whom I will have compassion. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." This glorious sovereignty of God in saving whom he will, our Lord celebrates in language of devout thanksgiving. "At that time Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it hath seemed good in thy sight." This doctrine, the regenerate person finds fully confirmed in his own experience. In a manner altogether out of his previous view, and entirely contrary to his deserts, as a wicked creature, he finds himself brought to the bosom of mercy, to see with new eyes, to taste with a new relish, to mourn

with new sorrow, to rejoice with new joy, to be translated into a new spiritual and most glorious liberty, to be taught a new song, and to speak a new language. He is as a man raised from the dead; while many of his neighbors remain blind, stupid, unbelieving, sensual, deaf to persuasion, and blind to evidence. Whence this difference? It is not in himself. For the effect was neither in his intention, nor design; no, not even in his idea. It is not the effect of any means, used by other persons. For the same means had been employed years before, without any good effect. It is clearly an invisible, supernatural influence, which leaves nothing to say but, "Even so, Father, for so it hath seemed good in thy sight." In his own experience he finds it a fact, that "one is taken and another left."

The doctrine of eternal, personal election, also, which runs through the Scriptures, from the beginning to the end, and from which his mind in all probability previously revolted with strong aversion, is by his experience made real, certain, indisputable; and a most glorious, a most precious doctrine too. "For, whence is this marvelous change in my views and feelings? Whence is it, that, from an unbelieving, hardened, stout-hearted wretch, I am become such a hoping, believing, happy creature—justified, brought nigh, adopted, placed in the bosom of infinite love, united by faith to Jesus, and made a joint heir with Him of eternal glory? It is not my work. It is no neighbor's work. It is the effect of no preaching. *It is the work of God.* Here is salvation indeed, in the essence and glory of it. The everlasting day has dawned upon my soul. The sun of righteousness has risen upon me with healing in his wings. Must not this great work be the effect of design? Could

God have brought it to pass without designing to do it, any more than he could create the material earth without designing to do it? It is impossible. A rational being cannot act without design; and especially so infinitely intelligent and glorious a being as God. And could it be a design of the moment, formed in him, and on the ground of any previous good inclination or endeavors, strivings or prayers foreseen in me? No. For no such things existed in me. I was wholly against this salvation of which I am now happily made the subject. Besides, my reason teaches me, that as God is self-existent and necessarily existent, He must be always the same. His designs, therefore, must be eternal." Thus the believer's experience of renewing and sanctifying grace leads him directly and inevitably into the doctrine of personal, eternal election, laid down in the holy Scriptures. It assures him that it must be so, and cannot be otherwise; and that it is in execution of such a purpose of election unto life, that the whole church is redeemed from among men. In this view, it now appears to him as glorious and precious a doctrine, as it appeared hateful before. The whole work of redemption now opens upon his mind in all its reality and glory, as the execution of this purpose. Heaven is brought near to him by anticipation. The promises and threatenings of the Scriptures are made substantial realities, and this naturally and necessarily by the teachings of his own experience. Now the language of all the prophets and apostles, and the language of heaven itself becomes his own.

3. This evidence rises with greater and greater clearness out of the subsequent series of exercises and labors of the believer's life. It is not true that any one who has become

a real partaker of regenerating grace ever wholly falls away, or reverts to his previous state of impenitence and unbelief. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," says Christ, "he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life." "And the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." The renewed man, then, is to be considered as in a state of progress, as walking steadfastly in a different road, as having his face heavenward. The experience which he has in the event of his conversion, peculiarly noticeable then to himself and others for the newness and unexpectedness of it, becomes extended through the passages of successive days and years, till his trials are finished, his preparation for glory completed, and he receives the end of his hope, the salvation of his soul. Though the evidence he derives from his illumination and conversion is very strong, it is greatly augmented in the whole of his subsequent course. More and more he has the witness in himself. The Scriptures, with a uniform language, as though they were written by one person instead of many, very distinctly inform us what are the habitual, governing feelings, the moral complexion, and the prospects of every sanctified person till he dies; that every such person chooses God as his portion, cleaves to Him as the rock of his hopes, has the spirit of adoption, by which he cries Abba, Father, finds it good to draw near to Him, seeks His glory as his chief end, and longs to be wholly conformed to Him. The Scriptures represent such persons, when the eye of their mind is turned towards Christ, as filled with a very tender love to His person, and as rejoicing

in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. To them all, He is said to be precious—chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely. His church, as His mystical body and a holy society, composed of all who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, is represented as exceedingly dear to them, in its nature and in all its interests, its members as partaking of the spirit of Christ, however poor, ignorant or despised in this world. "Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee." "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Just such the real believer, as he passes on the journey of life, finds his feelings to be with respect to all these spiritual objects. He finds an admirable harmony between the exercises of his own mind and the delineations of the Bible, as though a great part of that book were written with the express purpose of describing him.

This harmony appears equally clear in other views. The Scriptures represent the believer as not yet perfectly holy; having the remains of a corrupt heart; sanctified but in part. "The spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." This forms an internal spiritual warfare, calling for constant self-examination, watchfulness, and careful self-government. Paul has delineated the nature of this internal warfare, in what he has said respecting himself in various parts of his writings. Even the affectionate John, who seemed to live as much on the confines of heaven as any one of

the apostles, has expressly declared; "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Now if we allow that there are such persons as real believers, we must suppose they all have the daily experience of this internal warfare. For we have never yet seen an absolutely perfect Christian. If they have some degree of holy conformity to God, but are not absolutely perfect characters, they have remains of corruption in them. Ask any man whom you deem to be a real Christian, and he will tell you that this is exactly his case. He is obliged to maintain a prayerful warfare against his remaining corruptions, or be overcome by them to his own destruction. How powerfully, in this respect, does his own experience bear witness to the truth of the Bible.

To save a little time, however, for an improvement, I will suggest but one other part of his experience; and that is his spiritual warfare with the world. The Scriptures abundantly teach that there is and will be, at least till the millennium, a perpetual warfare between those who are born after the flesh and those who are born after the Spirit, that faithful Christians must expect the world's hatred, and that if they will 'live godly in Christ Jesus, they must suffer persecution.' This warfare between saints and sinners has been exemplified in an uninterrupted series of events from the death of Abel to the death of Christ, and from the death of Christ to this day. Every man truly converted to God, by becoming enrolled among the multitude of sufferers for Jesus' sake, steps at once into this experience. As soon as he dare take a stand as a Christian, he is assailed with the fiery darts of the wicked one. He is an object of some sort of persecution from the world. Some experience more

of this than others. Those who are most eminently valiant for truth and holiness upon the earth, may expect to meet the most of it. But being in exact accordance with the warnings of Christ, and the general tenor of the Bible, it adds force to the evidence that the system of religion which the Bible contains, is from God. Thus, to sum up the whole, in that illumination of which he is the subject antecedently to his conversion, in the event and nature of his conversion itself, and in his subsequent exercises and pursuits, comforts and sorrows, internal and external warfare, the believer has with very powerful conviction "the witness in himself."

IMPROVEMENT.

1. This subject accounts for the very positive manner in which experienced Christians sometimes speak of the certain truth of the Gospel. Their apparent firm and unshaken reliance upon it, the apparent unshaken stability of their faith, which often appears to unexperienced men a blind enthusiasm, and the firm and immovable resolution with which they often abide the most fiery trials, are hereby clearly explained. Their experience in their illumination, conversion and subsequent habitual views and feelings, is in the place of a thousand arguments to prove to them the certain truth of Christianity. It is like that evidence which, on common subjects, is derived through the senses. Does any man doubt whether that tree exists, which he sees with his eyes? And can the Christian any more doubt the truth of things as much the objects of his spiritual sight? The Gospel is never received with a proper faith, it never makes any lasting and useful impression, but when

it is accompanied to the soul by "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Thus accompanied, it comes with power, and is received with much assurance. And how can it be expected but that all Christians who have received the Gospel in this manner, will hold it fast with a firm reliance on its truth? Blessed be God, this evidence and firmness of faith can come into the possession of the weak things of this world, as well as of the mighty.

2. We are in this subject presented with an idea of the peculiar happiness of the real Christian. The riches of a blessed experience have placed him, in sentiment and feeling, hope and expectation, on the broad basis of truth, which is itself most comforting and supporting to his soul through the force of evidence the most full and decisive, and with respect to which he cannot be deceived. While the proud and wicked, the vaunting, the pretendedly learned and philosophic Deists, are shifting from one thing to another, ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth, believing and then disbelieving what they have believed, are driven about with every wind of doctrine, and sometimes desponding, the humble Christian, taught supernaturally by all-subduing grace, has a hope which is "like an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail."

3. We may see in the light of this subject the impropriety of depending on the correctness of the opinions and belief of men with respect to the truth of the Christian system, or the truth of its fundamental doctrines, merely because they have the reputation of abilities, rank and learning. Many such there are indeed who disbelieve the Gospel, and others who pretend to receive it as a whole,

yet deny it in its particulars. But what then? Their abilities and learning only serve to lead them into error, so long as they are unacquainted with the renovating power of grace and are led on by an unenlightened and unsanctified heart. They are destitute of the best sort of evidence—that which arises from experience. The man who is yet blinded by the god of this world, and who loves darkness rather than light, should have but very little value attached to any opinion he may form on the subjects of religion. Beware how you are led away by the corrupt maxims of men who know not the truth.

4. On what a precarious and equivocal foundation do careless sinners rest their hopes that they shall not be finally and eternally lost. It is on this—that the Bible is not true in its system or in its leading doctrines. This is the broken reed on which their habitual peace of mind depends. One glimpse of light shed over their minds by the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit, would take away all their hopes. Then they would have the witness, in some degree at least, in themselves. Presumptuous creatures, you hope that the Bible is not true. Your unbelief is the reason why you are so easy. But remember that there are thousands and thousands who have the witness in themselves.

§ 6. Rev. Charles A. Goodrich.

Dr. Austin's removal to Burlington, without a dissolution of his pastoral connection, involved the necessity of procuring a colleague. To fill this office until the dismission of his predecessor, and thenceforward to be sole pastor, the Rev. Charles A. Goodrich was invited, July 15, 1816. On the 9th of Oct. following, he was ordained. The Rev. Benjamin Wood of Upton, made the introductory prayer on that occasion; Rev. Samuel Goodrich of Berlin, Ct., father of the candidate, preached the sermon; Rev. Edmund Mills of Sutton, offered the prayer of consecration; Rev. Mr. Smith of Durham, Ct., gave the charge; Rev. John Nelson of Leicester presented the right hand of fellowship; Rev. Joseph Goffe of Millbury addressed the people; and Rev. Mr. Whittlesey of Washington, Ct., closed the exercises with prayer.

Although serious difficulties occurred while Mr. Goodrich was connected with this church, yet his ministry, on the whole, was greatly blessed. From the day of his ordination special interest began to be manifested on the subject of personal piety, many hopeful conversions occurred, and, in the course of a single year, about eighty individuals were added to the church on profession of their faith. These transformations of moral character appear to have been wrought without boisterous excitement and with the ordinary use of the means of grace. The pastor was cordially sustained by the prayers and coöperation of his brethren; and, although the work of grace seems not to have met with favor in every direction, yet from it many dated the com-

mencement of a new life, and their future conduct proved that it was 'the life of God in the soul of man.' An eye-witness testifies that "there was little or no excitement in any of our meetings; but often a stillness which was like [that of] the chamber of death. In short, it was a solemn and efficient work of the Holy Spirit."

Encouraged by such tokens of divine favor, Mr. Goodrich continued his labors with diligence; and, though there were not wanting occasions to test his patience and depress his spirit, he yet carried with him the sympathies of the body of his church and society, and was greatly encouraged by their confidence and affection. On the 23d of Dec. 1818, he became sole pastor of the church by the dismission of Dr. Austin. The particular events which preceded, attended and followed this dismission, cannot here be detailed. The materials for writing this portion of the ecclesiastical history of Worcester are accessible and abundant; but it does not comport with the design of this work to embody that history. Mr. Goodrich had his trials: they were many and great. That he and his friends were always wise and never committed any mistakes, he would be the last to claim; that those who opposed him were always in the exercise of a Christian spirit or conscientiously observed the rule of reciprocal affection in all respects, is in nowise probable. In the progress of such difficulties many agencies are put in operation, many secret forces come into play, which no one can fully appreciate who cannot see the end from the beginning, and the full development of which must be left to that day which "shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Mr. Goodrich conceived it to be a duty to retire from a place where, however

earnestly he desired to do good, there was so much to impair the efficiency of his labors. He therefore asked a dismission from his church and society; and his pastoral relation was dissolved, Nov. 14th, 1820.

The Rev. Charles A. Goodrich was born in Ridgefield, Ct., Aug. 19, 1790. His father was the Rev. Samuel Goodrich of that place, and his grandfather, the Rev. Elizur Goodrich, D. D., of Durham, Ct.,—"distinguished for his literary and scientific acquirements, as well as for his piety and patriotism; an excellent minister, he conciliated the esteem of his acquaintance, and was faithful in all the relations of life."* The grandson entered Yale College in 1807. Early in his collegiate course, his attention was particularly turned to the realities of salvation. In the midst of a revival† in which the deep religious sympathies of Dr. Dwight were drawn forth in a remarkable manner, he, after protracted mental struggles, found rest to his spirit at the foot of the cross, and hopefully consecrated himself to the service of the Crucified One. Interrupted in his studies by ill health, he was not graduated till 1812. Prevented by the same cause from entering a theological seminary, he studied theology with the Rev. Dr. Yates of East Hartford, Ct., afterwards Professor of Moral Philosophy in Union College, and with the Rev. Dr. Nott, President of that institution. In 1815, he was licensed to preach the Gospel, and labored a few months at Saratoga Springs, preaching in Congress Hall. Settled in Worcester in 1816, he remained here more than four years,

* Allen's Biographical Dictionary.

† Mr. Goodrich has given a very interesting account of this work of grace in his book entitled "Incidents in the Life of President Dwight."

and then retired with enfeebled health, which incapacitated him for preaching, and indicated to him very clearly, after some time, that a re-settlement in the ministry was not to be sought. Reluctantly compelled to relinquish the hope of resuming pastoral duties, he was obliged to turn his thoughts to some other mode of serving his Lord. Up to the present time, however, he has been able to preach occasionally, and finds great pleasure in an exercise so congenial to his best feelings. For many years, he has been engaged principally in literary pursuits. His efforts in this department, have been attended with a success greatly cheering to him and his friends. Not able to perform the duties of a settled pastor, his pen has done good service to the cause of education, morals and religion. Some of his works have met with a demand which multiplied them to more than 100,000 copies, each.* He now resides in Hartford, Ct., passing his declining years among friends, and knowing that the time of his departure is at hand, his confidence in that 'faith which was once delivered to the saints,' was never stronger than it is at present.

The following sermon has been kindly furnished by Mr. Goodrich for this work. It will serve as a specimen of the manner in which he was accustomed to speak to his people,

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* The following is a list of the principal works which Mr. Goodrich has prepared for the press.

United States History—duod. School His. of U. S.—18mo. Child's His. do.—18mo. Lives of the Signers of the Dec. Ind.—royal duod. Universal Traveller—duod. Ecclesiastical His—oct. Do. School.—18mo. Abridgment of Fox's Book of Martyrs—oct. View of All Religions—duod. Great Events of American His.; a recent work—oct. 900 pp. Sabbath Day Miscellany—duod. Tourist—duod. Bible His. Prayer—duod. School Geog.—18mo. Last Hours of Christ—18mo. Incidents in the Life of Pres. Dwight—18mo. Several other smaller works.

when a settled pastor. It can hardly fail to possess a deep interest for those who once listened to the tones of his voice; and their successors in the church to which he ministered will appreciate the affectionate spirit which breathes in its dedication.

SIN UNIVERSAL:

REASONS FOR PREACHING THE DOCTRINE,

SET FORTH IN A

DISCOURSE,

ORIGINALLY DELIVERED TO THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY,

IN

WORCESTER, MASS.,

BY THE

REV. CHARLES A. GOODRICH.

NOTE.

The author of the following discourse having been invited to contribute a sermon to a work soon to be published, entitled "The Worcester Pulpit," embraces the occasion respectfully to dedicate it to the surviving few of the church and congregation to whom, many years since, it was his pleasure and privilege to minister in holy things, and to their descendants and successors;—with the devout wish that the thraldom of which it treats, and in which by nature all of them are involved, may be followed in respect to each and every one by a translation into the "glorious liberty of the Sons of God."

HARTFORD, CT., Jan. 1, 1851.

SERMON.

Rom. 3: 12. *They are all gone out of the way.*

As the portrait painter is expected to draw a faithful likeness of the natural man, so the minister of Jesus Christ is expected to present a correct likeness of the moral man. But whatever liberties the former may sometimes take—whatever blemishes he may conceal, or artificial beauties or adventitious colors he may superinduce, the latter has no such privilege. He may in no wise flatter; he may neither add to, nor deduct from the exact truth. Especially, does his Master bid him leave fancy sketches, and paint according to Scripture, and true to nature.

The representations which ministers are required to make, they well understand, are far from being pleasing to the carnal heart. They know full well what sinners love, for being themselves sinners, why should they be ignorant of the partialities of a sinful nature?

But in one respect sinners do us injustice. They affect to believe that we delight in drawing ugly portraits; in giving all possible prominence to moral deformities—so blending our colors, as to present human nature in shades, as dark and disgusting as may be.

But there is no truth in the charge. Where is the painter who does not prefer to draw a beautiful face to one

without form and comeliness? And, surely, where is the minister who does not take more pleasure in setting forth the moral beauties of Paul and John, of Payson, Hannah More and Harriet Newell, than the odious moral deformities of the Judases, the Neros, the Voltaires, and Tom Paines, whose dark visages have disgusted mankind? It is a libel upon us to say, that we prefer the dark shades of human nature to those which are bright and animating. We can appreciate the beauties of a serene and cloudless sky, and love the day, as well as others, which is bright and balmy.

But, then, we are not ignorant that there are days that are dark and stormy. The natural world is not all beautiful; not every fountain is pure; not every plant is wholesome; not every tree yields good fruit. Just so in the moral world. There are men whose hearts are vile, whose lives are bad, and who, considered as the subjects of a divine government, are without any conformity to it. Nay, aside from some radical change from some quarter, wrought in the soul, want of conformity to the law of God is characteristic of all men born into the world; or, adopting the laconic, yet emphatic language of the apostle, "They are all gone out of the way."

The word "way" is a term of very comprehensive signification; in the literal sense denoting a place of passing, as a road, a street, or lane; while in its figurative application, it is used to express various shades of thought. As employed by the apostle, it has reference to that conduct or course of life prescribed by the divine law, but from which the race has departed. That the apostle means a total departure — an entire deviation of the race, both indi-

vidually and collectively, is evident; for he immediately adds — "they are together become unprofitable"; i. e. at the same time, or equally. The word "unprofitable" in the Hebrew is applied to any thing which is offensive, and therefore *spoiled*. Such is the representation of Paul, when discoursing of human nature. And to the truth of this representation, every believer in the divine authority of the Scriptures will yield assent, how humbling and unpalatable soever such a doctrine may be felt to be.

And this brings me to a specific statement of my design: *To assign some reasons why the ministers of Jesus Christ preach the doctrine of the universal prevalence of sin.*

I. The truth touching human nature requires such preaching.

This general remark resolves itself into two particulars:

The first is, that the Scriptures justify such a view of human nature; and, indeed, admit of no other.

It forms no part of my plan to-day, to dwell upon particular passages. It is the general scope of Scripture to which I would draw your attention.

What, then, is the moral character of the human heart as presented in the Scriptures? Beginning with the history of Adam and Eve at that period, when

> They hand in hand, with wand'ring steps, and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way;

down to the closing chapter of the sacred canon, how is man represented?

The scriptural history embraces a period of 4000 years. It speaks of mankind in general, and of individual nations, and individual persons. It enters into their history, their

manners, their customs, laws and religion. And, we ask, is there a single exception named to the general declarations — "They are all gone out of the way: there is none righteous, no not one."

If such exceptions had ever existed, or did then exist, why did not Paul name them? Why not, if consistent with truth and fact, let in one ray of light on that dark portraiture of the race given in this third chapter of his letter to the Romans? Why, if Paul was in error, did not some brother apostle correct him? But, in truth, all the apostles have drawn similar pictures of man; and the reason is obvious. They had the same subject; they sat at the same easel; they were taught by the same Master.

What, then, is the inference? Why, if the Scriptures do not name one nation, nor one individual holy by nature, no such nation, and no such individual has lived since the fall. Nay, the scripture representation is stronger than mere inference. It directly and positively asserts that no such nation and no such individual had existed. In this third chapter to the Romans, the apostle declares that he had "*proved*" that both Jews and Gentiles were alike under sin. But Jews and Gentiles then embraced the entire population of the globe — all nations in all lands. And as if this was not an asseveration sufficiently strong, the apostle adds in his own emphatic style — "the whole world is guilty before God."

The precise question, then, is this. To what conclusion, touching the heart of man, would one arrive, who should sit down to the *candid* and *honest* perusal of the whole Scripture? The captious unbeliever, or the prejudiced and predetermined sectarian might doubtless torture particular

passages, and by so doing deduce from them, considered separately from their legitimate connection, the vestiges of a holy nature, still existing in the human bosom; but taken in their designed and continued scope, what would be the result? In other words, do not the Scriptures *mean* to convey the doctrine that the natural state of man, as a moral and accountable being, is one of alienation from, and enmity to the holy character of God, and therefore destitute of holiness? If on the contrary man approves of that character, because it is holy, and desires conformity to the divine will—indeed, if in any degree he wears the moral image of his Maker, in which he was certainly created, why such language?—why such representations in the Bible? On what hypothesis other than the utter and universal prevalence of sin, can this third chapter of the letter to the Romans be satisfactorily interpreted?

On a point of such fundamental importance, might we not most reasonably look for clear and definite statements in a revelation from God? If the moral character of the human heart is known, God knows it; and if the truth respecting it can be conveyed by language, surely we might look for it in a volume penned by the finger of inspiration, and with the special intention of placing this solemn, and of all subjects most interesting and important to man, clearly and honestly before the world and the universe.

Has God then failed? Has he spoken intentionally in terms indefinite and obscure? Did he design that with this revelation in their hands men might still grope in darkness and be *honest:* that they might appear at the judgment-seat with the well-grounded plea and excuse, that the character of the human heart remained unsettled in His

word: and that they themselves were anxious to ascertain the truth, and in the holy oracles made honest and diligent search after it, but clouds and darkness rested upon it?

Is this probable? Is the truth touching the moral nature of man involved in such strange obscurity? Does the Bible, with all its divine pretensions, throw no light on a subject, which lies at the very foundation of the Gospel scheme of salvation, and is the hinge on which turn the punitive dispensations of God, who claims to be righteous in all his ways?

If, then, the character of the human heart remains unsettled in the Bible, we venture to say, that it was not intentional. God *meant* to tell what it is. If in this he has failed, it has come to pass from the impossibility of doing it. But who, for one moment, would credit such a statement? Of the glories of that upper world where Paul now is, and of which he caught glimpses in some favored hour in the days of his flesh, he might well fail to give any adequate account. Those glories were too spiritual and too sublime to be described in any earthly dialect, or to be comprehended by man in his state of pupilage on earth. But touching the heart of man, a fair, comprehensive account was quite easy for such a one as Paul, especially under the teachings of the divine Spirit. Such an account Paul attempted in this chapter, and he writes as if master of his subject. No hesitation marks his manner; no equivocation characterizes his language. And what does he declare? Most solemnly, most emphatically, "They are all gone out of the way; there is none righteous, no, not one."

2. My second remark is, that the history of the world

confirms the scripture account of the character of the human heart.

But here we are met with three truths or facts, which deserve a preliminary consideration. And I solicit your special attention to this part of my discourse, as necessary to a fair estimate of the moral character of man.

The first of these facts is, that there are certain characteristics of human nature, or of man as a compound being, which are *innocent*.

I may specify hunger and thirst, the fear of suffering, and the desire of happiness. These belong to man, whatever be his moral character. They are inseparable from him. Were he holy as was our Lord Jesus Christ, they would still be characteristic of him; or vile as was Judas, they would still pertain to him. In themselves, therefore, they are neither holy nor sinful.

2. Some of these natural characteristics are even *amiable* and *lovely*.

I may instance the natural affection of the parent for his child; the sweet disposition often observed in children and youth; the compassion and generosity which some individuals possess in a high degree. These traits are found in persons of a directly opposite moral character — in the good and the bad — in the holy and the unholy — in the Christian and the sinner. It is not to be denied that these traits, or sympathetic affections, may become the means or occasions of holiness or sin, but in themselves they possess no moral qualities whatever. Hunger and thirst as natural appetites are innocent; yet, under the influence of a wrong heart, they may conduce to make that heart decidedly worse. Hunger may prompt to gluttony; thirst to

intemperance. The desire of happiness, quite innocent in itself, may lead to licentiousness. So the natural affection of the parent, originally right and proper, so right and proper, that without it a parent would be a monster, and deserving of the reprobation of God and man, may induce that parent, I mean under the selfish promptings of a wicked heart, to treat his own children far better than other children, confided to his care, but who on every principle of right are entitled to an equal share of kind attention.

In our estimate, then, of human nature, let us call things by their right names. Let us not put bitter for sweet, nor sweet for bitter. Yet, this is the error of thousands. They blend things which should ever be kept distinct. They exalt certain natural attributes, or amiable human characteristics, without which society could scarcely exist —and some of which are to be found even in savage bosoms, to a dignity and importance—to an alliance with holiness—to which they never were and never will be entitled. They are not holy, although they may conduce to higher degrees of holiness; they are not sinful, although when pressed into the service of a sinful heart, they tend to increase its turpitude. Under the prevalence of a sinful disposition, they may become the instruments of sin; under the prevalence of a holy disposition, they may be made the instruments of righteousness.

3. Notwithstanding, however, the moral nature of man is thus utterly sinful, i. e. without conformity to the will of God, and without any likeness to his moral image, there have, in point of fact, existed in all periods of the world, some, and in some periods, many truly *good*, or *holy* men.

Even in the earlier ages, we read of Abel, Noah, Abra-

ham, Moses; and in later periods of thousands of others. Now, on what principle, consistent with the views of human nature here taken, shall we account for this moral phenomenon? Were these persons exceptions to the general rule? Not if Paul was right. They were the "degenerate plants of a strange vine," as truly as others.

The mystery is easily explained, and for the purpose of explanation, I invite you to accompany me. Here is a fruit-orchard, and in it an apple-tree. It is loaded with fruit. I pluck some of it, and present it to you. You taste, and pronounce it bad. I give you some from another branch. Still bad. From a third, a fourth, and so on—all bad—and the tree and its fruit you pronounce worthless; and you seem to be right. But at length I descry some fruit on a particular branch which wears a different aspect. I pluck some of it, and you eat. "Quite another thing," you observe; "this is good, very good;" and immediately you add, "this cannot be the natural production of this stock—it must be a *graft*." Yes—it is the fruit of a graft. And here is the secret of all the holiness which has, at any time, existed in the bosom of man, since the memorable hour, when of another tree our

> Mother plucked that fruit "whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our wo."

That holiness is a graft. It is the product of a scion sent down from the tree of life, in the midst of the paradise above, inserted or grafted by the Spirit of God.

I am not pretending to speak, as you will readily perceive, with metaphysical exactness, and trust that no injurious inferences will be drawn from the language I employ.

What I mean to say is, that all those, who in any period of the world, since the era above-named, have borne the fruits of holiness, have had in every instance superinduced upon them, or wrought in them a holy disposition. In the language of the Bible, they have been "born again." A new nature has been imparted to them. But, aside from that change, (whence soever derived, or whatever called) they were in all respects, essentially as were others, "dead in trespasses and sins." This is the scripture representation.

In our estimate, then, of the natural moral character of man, we are to leave out of view all such as have at any time become holy. They do not properly come into the account. Indeed, a just estimate requires us to confine ourselves to those nations upon whom the Bible has exerted no influence. I know not that there is such a people on the globe, who are destitute of all traditionary knowledge of divine things derived from the children of Israel, or their revelation, or from some remoter patriarch, who "walked with God." If there be such a people, I would select them, and diligently compare them with the declarations concerning human nature contained in the oracles of God. Would you learn what the earth is without the sun? Go to some latitude, if there be such, where solar rays, neither direct nor reflex, ever influence. And would you learn what the human heart is? Look at men, where the sun of righteousness never sheds even moral twilight, and where prophet and apostle of God never proclaimed a divine truth, and never named, and never proffered the pardon of sin, through the blood of Immanuel.

Not that human nature is not seen in its developments in this and other lands of the Bible and the sanctuary;

and often in its most debased and most awful forms. We have murders, and butcheries, and blasphemies; we have refinements in sin and impiety, which, perhaps, are seldom parallelled among heathen nations, to whom I have alluded; but these are instances where men have broken through all restraint imposed upon them by social ties, and civil and religious truth and influence. Whereas, in respect to the vast majority, their views, manners, morals, are more or less modified by the light and influence of Christianity. What then, independently of revealed truth, is human nature? What does Pagan history say?

Could I inscribe that history on some scroll here to-day, could I map it out on these walls, and spread it before you in some panoramic view, could you gaze upon it, as seen by the all-seeing eye of God, I dare say you would faint at the tides of human guilt and human crime passing before you. But I can write no such scroll, and I can present no such panorama. Nor is it necessary.

You have some acquaintance with history. Tell me, then, have you ever read of that heathen nation, which had a knowledge of the true God, or was willing to receive it?

Have you ever read of that heathen nation, which had any knowledge of the pure worship of God, or who paid to their idol deities a worship, which if paid to Him, would have been acceptable?

Have you ever read of that heathen nation among whom there were any such terms as holiness, faith, repentance, in the evangelical sense, or any terms which expressed their ideas?

Have you ever read of that heathen nation where the moral law in form or in substance was known, enjoined, or observed?

Have you ever known such a nation which was not filled with idols; with a low and debasing system of worship, and with rites and ceremonies, cruel, licentious and obscene?

And, finally, have you ever known one in which there is a well authenticated account of a single virtuous and holy man?

To each and to all of these interrogatories, you will be compelled to give a strong and prompt negation, unless you have fallen upon historic records, to which others have found no access. What, then, is the fair inference from such a catalogue of facts? What does the history of the world proclaim concerning the moral character of human nature? There is but one concurrent voice sounding out from every country on the globe, and reiterated by every age for 4000 years. "They have all gone out of the way; there is none righteous, no not one."

And as ambassadors of God, so we preach. So we are commanded: "Diminish not a word." Shall we, then, fail to deliver the messages of God, as He has handed them to us? Shall we to please ourselves, or to please others, represent that as pure which God has pronounced vile — that as still reflecting the divine image, which according to his word wears only the image of death? That were a violation of our trust, and a hazard of our own and our people's interests which we may not venture.

II. I add another reason why we thus preach, viz. That it is only upon the assumption of the truth of this doctrine of man's utter sinfulness, that we can attach great value to the Gospel.

The Gospel is described as "good news." That is its

very import. And it is represented in the Divine Word as the master-movement of the Infinite Mind. In it there is a display of mercy, such as the world from no other source ever saw, "which heaven stoops down to see." But, if human nature is not so debased, and man so utterly ruined by sin, as we represent, why do the sacred writers speak in terms so exalted of the grace of God? Why, if man needs but some slight change to fit him for companionship with angels, and communion with his Maker—why such a show on God's part of condescension and mercy? Tell me, if you are able, why Jesus went to the cross?—a problem of all problems most mysterious, if man is not sunken to the full extent of the scripture representation. Let it be remembered that in no single sentence of the inspired volume is there the shadow of an effort to magnify beyond the truth,—no, not God's attributes, nor his wisdom, nor his works, nor even his grace. But there is always "a hiding of his power;" there is a something unrevealed, something which even inspired language fails to express, and which excited imagination fails to conceive.

Doubtless it is so in respect to man's apostasy, and the moral darkness which consequently overshadows his soul. What gage has yet been taken of human guilt? What line has sounded its depths? What arithmetic calculated its consequences? Paul once attempted a measurement of divine grace, as that grace shone forth from the cross of Jesus Christ; but he paused: his eye could penetrate no such depths, could reach no such heights. All he felt able to do was to take a posture of admiration, and exclaim, "Oh, the heights and the depths of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

Paul's wonder and admiration are easily accounted for, if man's guilt and God's grace are such as we represent. But on any other hypothesis, they were most irrational and absurd. Would the infinite God, think you, lay claim to honor and praise from His creature man for interpositions for him, for which there was no necessity? Would Jesus have invited "wretchedness and woe," or stooped to the ignominy and agonies of the cross, had man's salvation been possible at less expense? Would angel choirs have come on pinions so swift, and sung songs so rapturous, had they not realized the necessity of the provisions of mercy?

And what are the bearings of truths like these? Obviously that we need no further evidence in regard to man's utter apostasy than comes from the Gospel system of recovering grace. From the cross of Jesus radiate beams of light on this subject, and if man does not see, as thousands of men do not see, and in their natural state will not see and appreciate them, still it amounts to a moral demonstration of the truth of the doctrine, that man is as the Scriptures declare him to be, "blind," and that that blindness is the consequence of sin and perverseness.

And so we preach. And so long as we stand here, as God's ambassador, we shall maintain his prerogatives; we shall exalt his grace; we shall magnify the love of Jesus. Yes, and we shall do it, hearers, at your expense, disrobing you of all imaginary goodness,—as in truth you possess no real goodness by nature,—and making proclamation, Sabbath after Sabbath,—by night and by day,—of the truth of this humbling doctrine, "All have gone out of the way."

III. These representations are made because, being true,

they alone are likely to exercise an important practical bearing upon sinners themselves.

What are the lessons taught by observation and experience, touching different estimates of man's moral character, and man's spiritual wants? Under what sort of preaching are men the most often converted? What system of doctrines best subdues them to a just estimate of themselves, and induces them to flee for mercy to the "hope set before them in the gospel?"

Look into those sanctuaries, where poor human nature, if not in fact eulogized and exalted, is represented as needing only some slight emendation, some few touches, some dust or rust removed, that the picture may shine out in all its original beauty and loveliness. But is it so? And in these sanctuaries are men often converted? Is it under such preaching, however elegant the diction or fascinating the manner, that sinners are compelled to cry out with the jailer at Phillippi, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Did Paul thus write to the Romans? Or was such the tenor of his preaching at Ephesus, at Corinth and other cities, where he was instrumental in turning hundreds and thousands from the error of their ways? Trace the history of all faithful and successful preaching from the day on which Jesus commissioned His apostles to go forth and disciple all nations to this very hour, and that system will be found to have been most efficacious, which has embraced at least the two cardinal doctrines—man's sinfulness and dependence, and God's grace and sovereignty. Not until Lot is ready to perish will he flee from Sodom; and not even then, unless he be moved to escape, as it were by force.

And in respect to the sinner, let him hear doctrines

which give no trouble to his conscience and flatter him with encomiums upon his generosity, his compassion, his benevolent wishes and his acceptableness to his Maker, and not more surely do chains rivet the convict in his cell, than he continues the slave and the contented slave of sin.

Would the minister of Jesus rescue such a one? By what process can such rescue be effected, but by the plain and solemn assurance, that his spiritual condition is far different from what he supposes? He is "out of the way;" he is "dead in trespasses and sins;" he is "under the wrath and curse of God;" he is "without hope in the world." Tell him all this; speak it in tones of tenderness and grief; make him feel that you are his friend; that you would save his soul; and at length, it may be long—after many a teaching—and after many an agonizing supplication, but at length, you may expect to hear him ask, "Sir, what must I do?"

And it is because of anticipated results like these that we make such representations of fallen human nature, and of the peril of man under that condition. On the basis of a different representation, such as some venture to advocate and dare to make, we should as soon expect to see the issues of the day of Pentecost, under the promulgation of the mystic jargon of the oracles of Delphos or Dodona.

I ask you, my friends, in conclusion, to judge of this subject, as its importance demands. Give it a candid and honest examination; for, if our estimate of the doctrine be just, some remedy corresponding to the nature and extent of the malady must be sought. If true, the race of man is ruined, and there exists within it—neither in the individual nor the mass, any self-restoring power. If true, we

need the timely interposition of some almighty friend; the application of some sovereign remedy.

That remedy the Gospel professes to furnish. And to that Gospel how delightful to turn, for a moment, after contemplating a picture whose coloring is so truly dark and gloomy! To the cross of Jesus, my people, I would conduct you, and in that mirror of love and compassion, I ask you to contemplate not only your guilt, but your all-sufficient remedy. On that cross hangs the Lord of Glory! There He suffers, there bleeds, and there dies. And why? I will tell you. You sinned, and for your sins He bore the curse. You had wandered, and He wanted to bring you "to his fold again." You had plunged yourself into a "gulf of black despair," and He undertook to raise you to life and joy.

What a theme of contemplation! What a marvel in the history of man. What other work of God bears a comparison with this? What in the heavens above have the angelic hosts probably seen so wonderful, so glorious, as they here see on earth? But I must insist no longer. And yet, hearers, I would fain not leave this subject, nor this sanctuary of hope and mercy, until, in view of the cross of Jesus, and the holy and exalted objects, which, on that cross, He accomplished, you all join me in the reverent declaration:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all."

Yet, if there be those whose obduracy of heart shuts out the consideration of subjects in which immortal interests

are involved, what more for such can I do? I would fain inquire, "Know you where you are in the long path-way of your being? In what direction, spiritually, are you traveling? What is your distance already from 'holiness, and purity, and God?'"

My impenitent friends, you have sometime marked the comet in yonder heavens, as it went forth into the abysses of the universe. That comet is still on its adventurous flight; it will continue its wanderings for years and ages to come. Generations, meanwhile, will be born and die; kingdoms will rise and flourish and decay. The mountains of earth will sink, and the pyramids crumble to dust; yet once more that *erring* world will return, its light will again break upon the eye of gazing millions; but mark it, and remember it—a soul once lost continues its wandering, and returns no more.

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§ 7. Rev. Arætius B. Hull.

The vacancy created by the retirement of Mr. Goodrich, was filled with unanimity and satisfaction in about six months. His successor, the Rev. Arætius B. Hull, was ordained on the 22d of May, 1821. The Rev. Dr. Puffer of Berlin, led in the introductory services; Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor of New Haven, preached the sermon; Rev. Daniel Tomlinson of Oakham, offered the prayer of consecration; the charge was given by the Rev. Joseph Avery of Holden; the Rev. John Nelson of Leicester, expressed the fellowship of the churches; the Rev. Thomas Snell of

North Brookfield, addressed the church; and the Rev. Micah Stone of Brookfield, closed with prayer.

Mr. Hull was a native of Woodbridge, Ct. The family from which he descended, came from the neighborhood of Liverpool, England, to New Haven, soon after the settlement of that place. Born, Oct. 12th, 1778, he entered Yale College at the age of fifteen, and was graduated, with distinguished reputation for scholarship and character, in 1807. Requiring the means for prosecuting a professional education, he took charge of the academy in Wethersfield, Ct. Physical debility obliged him soon to relinquish this employment. Affected with pulmonary complaints, he journeyed South, seeking a more genial clime than he could find in New England. There he found the relief which he could not anticipate here. In 1810, he was appointed tutor in his Alma Mater, and entered upon the duties of that office with the confidence of improved health. He continued in this service for six years. During this period he turned his attention to the study of theology, and in 1816 was licensed to preach the Gospel. In this new work, notwithstanding frequent interruptions occasioned by infirm health, he employed his talents with assiduity and cheerfulness. Called to take the oversight of this church, he recognized the guiding hand of Providence; and, although penetrated with a deep sense of responsibility, he entered upon his duties with alacrity, and, while strength permitted, magnified his office. It was a labor of love with him. Constantly reminded of the weakness of man and the uncertainty of life, he 'watched for souls,' as one who must 'give account.' Emphatically, as a dying man, he spoke to his fellow-mortals. Yet he showed that religion has

power to cheer and bless, even in prospect of a speedy dissolution. Though often a sufferer from physical exhaustion, he exhibited great elasticity of spirits, with a hearty consecration to his profession, and won for himself a place in the warm affections of his people. In 1825, it was obvious that no medical skill could arrest his disease, and that how willing soever in spirit, the flesh was too weak to allow the continuance of those labors in which he delighted. During a year's sickness, he was sustained and cheered by those truths which he had announced in the name of Jesus. They were never more precious to him, than when the light of earth was fading away. Though heart and flesh were failing him, they were the strength and joy of his heart. With a countenance beaming with emotion, he would often exclaim, as he approached the closing scene, "I know in whom I have believed; he will not leave me." His testimony to the friends who knew not how to have him depart, was, "I am happy in the prospect of death." His work was done, and well done. He had nothing to do in the dying hour but to die. On the 17th of May, 1826, he was removed from his labors and sufferings, to enter upon his reward. Sincerely mourned by the people whom he had so faithfully served, his death was regarded as a public loss. "The memory of the just is blessed." "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

As a man, Mr. Hull was eminently social in his feelings, and genial in his intercourse with his fellow-men. His sympathies were quickly responsive to the touch of joy or sorrow. In his family, he was the affectionate husband, the kind and faithful father. In society, he endeared himself to all by the simplicity of his manners and the charms

of his conversation. With ardent attachments, refined sensibilities and peculiar delicacy of taste, he made his way to the hearts of the cultivated; with a heart 'to feel another's wo,' and soothe another's sorrow, he was a welcome friend to the poor.

As a Christian, he was sincere, earnest and symmetrical. In very early life, he began to walk in wisdom's way, and show an ardent attachment to the Saviour. "Of his benevolence, prayerfulness, fidelity in duty, and uncommonly Christian deportment, I need not speak; for his life has been a living epistle, known and read of all men. Judging from the fruit which he brought forth, religion was the basis of his character, and the all-pervading spirit of his life. He was, we have reason to believe, in the true and legitimate sense of the term, a good man—a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ."*

As a Christian minister, he was able, discriminating and faithful. "He possessed a mind of a very high order, and that mind was enriched with uncommon attainments of general as well as professional knowledge. His conceptions were clear, just and discriminating. At the same time, a highly cultivated taste, a refinement of thought and feeling, as pleasing as it was genuine, pervaded all his writings."†

His public efforts, if not among the most profound and thrilling of the human intellect, were uniformly good. Too refined and conscientious to turn his people off with extemporaneous crudities, he studied his sermons, and wrote them out with care. Having a nice appreciation of proportion and peculiar delicacy of criticism, whatever came from his pen

* Dr. Nelson's sermon at Mr. Hull's funeral. † Ibid.

was excellent in its several parts, and harmonized in combination. He is now often spoken of with kindling emotion, and will long be remembered as the Christian gentleman, the affectionate pastor and excellent minister. A monument recently erected to his memory by the church that he served in the Gospel, thus commemorates him:

THIS MONUMENT IS
erected to commemorate the faithful services
and the virtuous example
of the
REV. ARÆTIUS BEVIL HULL,
Minister of the First Congregational Society in Worcester.
He was born at Woodbridge, Conn.,
October 12, 1788.
Graduated at Yale College in 1807,
where he was six years a Tutor,
And was ordained in Worcester, May 22, 1821.
He Died May 17, 1826, aged 38.

He endeared himself to the people of his charge by his affectionate and assiduous devotion to his ministerial and pastoral duties, while the suavity of his manners, the purity of his life, and the sincerity and earnestness of his efforts in advancing the cause of education, and in the promotion of the general interests of the community, commanded its respect and gratitude.

He was a scholar of refined taste, and the style of his discourses was unusually chaste and perspicuous, earnest and direct; harmonizing with the tenor of his life, and being rendered yet more impressive during the greater part

of his ministry, by his conscious and evident nearness to the grave. Accustomed to the best forms of polished life, he was dignified without display, and courteous without dissimulation, constantly manifesting in his private intercourse and in his public labors, that for himself and others, he sought first the Kingdom of Heaven.

The following sermon is inserted in this work, as a fair specimen of Mr. Hull's usual style of preaching. It exhibits him as simple, clear and affectionate in his mode of address, and as always saying something worth the hearing. His trains of thought were enriched with scriptural quotations, and often illustrated by historical allusions. His words flowed from a genial, believing heart, were uttered with the dignity of a calm self-possession, and urged upon the attention of his hearers with the earnestness of a spirit intent on doing good. Slight verbal alterations excepted, the discourse appears as it came from his own hand.

THE

PROVIDENCE OF GOD:

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED TO THE

FIRST CHURCH IN WORCESTER,

BY THE

REV. ARÆTIUS B. HULL.

SERMON.

MATTHEW 10: 29.

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

THESE words are a part of the discourse of Jesus, addressed to His twelve apostles, at the time He commissioned them to go and preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand, to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils. In this discourse He gave them particular instructions how they should proceed, in order faithfully to execute their commission. He then warned them of the dangers which awaited them, and of the sufferings to which they would be exposed. He next suggested those considerations which were suited to inspire them with courage firmly to meet these dangers, and with fortitude patiently to bear these sufferings. The principal topics upon which He here insisted, were, that they would have to endure no more and no greater trials than their Master endured; that God's providence extended to every being and every event; and that, if they proved faithful, they should at last be acknowledged and made happy in heaven.

It was while on the second of these topics that He utter-

ed the words of the text. Connected with the context, they assert the truth, that as God's attention is directed to the most unimportant creatures and events, the disciples of Christ, whose safety and ultimate and everlasting happiness must be regarded as matters of great consequence, ought not in the least to fear that their heavenly Father would forget or neglect them. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall upon the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." The application of this truth for the encouragement of the twelve disciples, was of this sort: "Though I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, though they will deliver you up to the councils and scourge you in their synagogues, though ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, though the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death, and though ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, fear not: none of these things can occur, except as they are under the direction and control of your heavenly Father, who can bring good out of evil, and who will cause all things to work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose."

Such a view of the providential government of God was well suited to inspire them with confidence while faithfully employed in their Master's service. Most of them afterwards showed that they were ready not to be bound only, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.

Such should be the effect on the mind of every Christian.

Trusting in the power, knowledge and goodness of God, they should be able to say with Paul, "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy."

That we may derive this and whatever other instruction may be directly deduced from such a view of God's providential government, we will first consider more particularly the truth declared in the text, and then mention some obvious inferences from it.

1. God, as the Ruler of the universe, attends to things which men account of but little importance. According to the plain declaration of the text, a creature, which at the valuation of men is worth but half a farthing, attracts the notice of the infinite God. Very possibly He estimates the value of many things by a different rule from any which men adopt. In His estimation, perhaps, the exquisite workmanship exhibited in the mechanism of the sparrow and of every living and sentient being, gives it a value which it has not in the estimation of him by whom that mechanism is overlooked or forgotten. The beauty of its form, the delicacy of its plumage, the curious formation of its limbs and organs separately considered, their wonderful adjustment, and their adaptation to their several functions, and above all, its capacity for suffering and for enjoyment, and its power of affecting the happiness of other creatures, are good reasons why even the sparrow, one of the smallest of birds, should not be regarded as worthless. What God has created with so much skill, it is reasonable to suppose He will preserve with care.

And yet it is not the sparrow's superiority over other creatures, which entitles it to such attention. It was

purposely selected by the Saviour, as a creature of relative insignificance, to impress the truth that no creature, however mean or worthless, has its destinies neglected by Him who made it. By parity of reasoning, not one of the feathered inhabitants of the sky, not an insect that flutters in the air, not a reptile that creeps on the earth, is beneath His notice. Even the insentient appendages of percipient beings, composed indeed of organized and animated matter, but incapable of suffering or of enjoyment, though they somewhat affect the happiness of the percipient and moral beings to which they belong, share also in the notice and remembrance of their great Creator. The Saviour says to His disciples in this connection, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." This fact, we must suppose, is suggested only by way of example. The God and Father of Christians has such a regard to their welfare, as not to suffer a hair of their head to be hurt, but for the purpose of advancing His great and good designs. If He numbers their every hair, He must be attentive to the smallest circumstance that can the most remotely affect their usefulness or their comfort. Such knowledge and attention imply and involve the notice of the situation and movements of the smallest portions of matter, organized or unorganized, animate or inanimate. Not a mote that floats in the atmosphere, not a particle of dust that is fixed in the earth, or that lies at the bottom of the sea, is too small for His observation, or too remote for His control.

2. This attention to the minute concerns of the world, is not paid by the Supreme Ruler at the expense of neglecting its more important interests. The drift of the argument is, that if these little things, comparatively worthless as

they are, are never neglected, how much more will greater events and more valuable creatures receive their due share of attention? Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. If every movement of the little priceless sparrow, that flits, and chirps, and dies, is directed by the Father of all, how much more precious in His eyes will be the life and death of His saints! Yes, He who has put each sand in its place on the sea-shore, who directs the course of each drop of water as it rolls in the ocean, who taught each scale of the finny tribes where to grow, who has appointed the bound of their habitation for each worm and fly, as well as for each bird and beast that He has made, and who marks out the path of the humblest of all His saints, and notices each step that he takes, not only thus individualizes His creatures, their actions and their destinations, but also notices, directs and controls their collected movements. Man may be so attentive to a mote, as not to perceive the beam that presses on his vision. But the infinite Mind, which has made and arranged, and which continually watches each particle of matter in all the elements, is equally attentive to all their vast combinations and important results. The tempestuous winds, the rolling clouds, the rumbling thunder, the lurid lightning, the tumultuous waters, the bursting volcano and the quaking earth, wild and destructive as is their agency, are all noticed and controlled by Him. He measures the waters in the hollow of His hand, and metes out heaven with the span, and comprehends the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. He moves the great globe itself on its axis, and along its lengthened orbit, and all the larger and more

distant planets of the system. The sun with its attendant worlds—nay, the innumerable myriads of suns seen by telescopic vision, with all their satellites, He wheels around the common centre of His creation, where, enthroned in light ineffable, He sits, and sees and rejoices in the constant but unwearying labors of His almighty hand.

3. All this attention to all the minute and to all the vast concerns of this wide universe, is continued and simultaneous. God is not obliged to suspend His care of any one part of His boundless dominions, while he bestows it upon another. His notice of the sparrow, when it falls fluttering to the earth, does not interrupt His attention to His persecuted and suffering saint. His all-piercing eye at the same and at every moment is fixed on every individual of all His numberless creatures, multiform and scattered as they are, from the seraph that burns before His throne to the earth-worm that hides from the light of day, and from the tenant of this lower world to the remotest star that twinkles at the noon of night. Nor does this multiplicity of objects confuse His vision or distract His attention. Each creature and each event is as clearly viewed and as deliberately scanned, as if it alone were the object upon which His ken is fixed. He knows the dangers and trials of each assaulted and suffering saint as distinctly as if there were no other perils or woes in the universe to be regarded and relieved. The falling sparrow receives the same attention that it would receive, were there no creature but that sparrow in the world. In a conflict of elements, mixing heaven with earth, and rolling the ruin onward, each particle of dust is driven as directly to its destination, as if air and ocean had been wrought into the tempest but for that single purpose.

Man can steadily and strongly direct his attention to but one object at a time: the infinite Mind embraces all at once, all things present, all things past, all things future, all things possible. "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite."

4. Nor is His a passive and uninterested vision of the world's concerns. His power and benevolence and faithfulness, are pledged and continually exerted in bringing about the events which occur; in strengthening, encouraging, supporting, consoling and rewarding His afflicted servants; in providing for the millions of His creatures who are evil and unthankful, as is the fact with most of mankind, and for those which have no moral character, as He hears the young ravens when they cry; in causing the innumerable contingencies, as the world would call them, so to concur, and interlock, and wind up and again unfold, as to bring good out of evil; in thwarting and disappointing the counsels of the crafty; in causing the wrath of man to praise Him; and in restraining the remainder from its noxious ebullitions. How many thousand instances have been recorded, in which the providence of God has unexpectedly and remarkably brought to light the innocence of those who had been falsely accused, and the wickedness of those who thought themselves secure from detection! Thus "unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness"; and thus "though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." He declareth "the end

from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "The Lord reserveth wrath for his enemies."

Thus attentive is God to the meanest of His creatures, and to the most unimportant of their movements: and this without at all interfering with the attention due to nobler beings and their more important destinies: and all this without cessation, without interruption, and without distraction, though the objects of His attention are so multiform and numberless: and thus He moves, guides, controls and harmonizes all the individuals with their separate and united interests, which compose His vast creation.

Several inferences from the subject as it has been presented for your consideration, shall conclude the discourse.

1. The first and most obvious inference is, How great must be the Mind that is adequate to all these numberless, complex, and simultaneous operations. The greatest activity and comprehension of thought exhibited by man on earth, fall infinitely below it. The prime minister of a great empire may have a very accurate and extensive knowledge of some of its most important concerns; and his influence may be extended through his subalterns to the extremities of the territory over which he presides. But how limited and defective is his knowledge, and how small and uncertain is his influence, compared with those of the infinite Disposer of all things. The statesman's attention is directed to the police, to the finances, to the defence, and to the foreign relations of his country. But what does he know of the private and individual feelings, fears, hopes, sufferings and enjoyments of the millions whose persons he

has not seen, and whose names he has not heard? What does he know of the animals, vegetables and minerals of the land, except as they collectively constitute the wealth of the inhabitants, or of the state? And of how little that he does know, does he acquire his knowledge by his own inspection? How dependent is he on others for his information, and, therefore, how liable to be deceived. By what long-continued and painful efforts must he obtain the scanty and imperfect knowledge which he does possess. And with a host of officers under him, whose interest it is to second his views, how does he fail of extending his influence as he could wish, to every family and every bosom throughout his dominions. The providence of God is attended with none of these imperfections; and is as much superior to the administration of government by the wisest man on earth, as that man's knowledge and power are superior to those of the meanest reptile that crawls.

2. How absurd is the objection not unfrequently alleged against the doctrine of a particular providence, that it is beneath the dignity of so exalted a being as Jehovah, to attend to the petty concerns of individuals. This is what proves Him to be so exalted a being. Is it beneath His dignity to govern what it was not beneath His dignity to create? The fact that the mighty movements of the universe which He directs and controls, do not interfere with a minute and constant attention to the humblest wants of the humblest of all His creatures, shows that to His intelligence and goodness no limits can be set. And the want of this power in earthly statesmen, though they may boast of it as an excellence, demonstrates their weakness. It may become the dignity of a king, in whose hand the

power of pardoning criminals is placed, to neglect all examination into the crimes and characters of his condemned culprits, and to order their indiscriminate execution. It may become the dignity of a minister of finance, to fill the treasury of the government, heedless of the toils and groans and tears of the wretched inhabitants by whose labor and privations all that treasure is accumulated. It may become the dignity of a conqueror to overlook the weariness, the wounds and the welterings of the thousands who fight under his standard, while he presses on to victory. They have not power in all cases to prevent these evils if they would. But it more highly becomes the dignity of the universal Sovereign, while he accomplishes His grand and benevolent designs, to see that the innumerable myriads of beings who instrumentally help them onward, should be dealt with according to the principles of justice and of mercy.

3. How worthy does God's providential government of the world prove Him to be of the admiration, love, obedience and confidence of His creatures. What shall we ever admire, if it be not power and intelligence so vast and incomprehensible? What shall we love, if it be not the benevolent character thus displayed to all who have intellectual vision to behold it, and the fruits of which are bestowed upon every percipient being? To whom shall we render obedience, but to Him, who imposes no duties but what are justly and benevolently appointed, and who by His creative power has constituted us His natural, and the rectitude of whose government should make us His voluntary subjects? In whom may we confide, if not in Him who possesses, and who has promised to exert all the power, intelligence and benevolence which are necessary

for our protection and relief. All these attributes are pledged in our behalf, if we will not repel and spurn the proffered aid. And can such powerless, ignorant and fallen creatures as ourselves reject the offer, and refuse to comply with the terms upon which it is made? If conscious of our weakness, folly and moral demerit, it would seem that we could not. But here lies our danger. Our darkened understandings and our depraved affections will not let us see and feel our need of God's providential care; and through our blindness and perverseness we undervalue what we ought most highly to prize. If we do not perform a duty so reasonable as to admire, love, obey and trust the providential Ruler of the world, we may justly expect that His government, just and holy as it always is, will, in regard to us, be exerted only to punish our rebellion.

4. Encouraged by the view which has been presented of God's providential government, let Christians go on their way rejoicing. This, after all, is the grand instruction which the subject offers; and it is that which the Saviour inculcated on His disciples, when he uttered the words upon which this discourse is founded. "Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows," was the practical inference which He drew from the fact, that even so inconsiderable an object as a sparrow shared in the attention and regard of their heavenly Father. And this inference is equally applicable to every Christian. Fear ye not, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Let it be but once well and truly settled that you are Christians, and all the heart-cheering encouragement here offered is yours. But beware of a mistake here on the threshold which may prove fatal. Judas Iscariot, who betrayed

Jesus, and then departed and hanged himself and went unto his own place, was one of the number thus addressed. Jesus was pleased not to make the exception. He addressed all as being what they professed to be, His true and faithful disciples; and only on the supposition that they were such, were they authorized to appropriate to themselves this conditional encouragement. The fact that God thought of and cared for sparrows, instead of the soothing words, "fear not," ought to have been interpreted by him as uttering the language of dread premonition which preceded, "Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." And its language to all should be, He that watches every sparrow as it falls, He whose scrutinizing eye numbers every hair of your head, watches also every step which you take, scrutinizes every affection of your heart, and registers every crime you commit; and when the measure of your iniquity is full, He will exert that infinite power and intelligence, yes, and that infinite benevolence, too, which stand engaged to make His holy creatures happy, to crush you beneath the weight of His just displeasure, and duly punish the insurrection which you have raised against the peace of His kingdom. But if you are Christians, if you are united to Jesus by the vital blood of faith, if you are truly penitent for your offences, if by a patient continuance in well-doing, you seek for glory and honor and immortality, fear not; firmly tread the path of active duty, calmly and peacefully lie on the bed of anguish: God, your God and Father, has promised, and He is able and faithful to protect and support you. If your way is dark, He will cause the light of His countenance to shine upon you. Is it rough and thorny? He will remove

every obstacle. And when at last He shall put into your hand the cup, which it is not possible to pass from you except you drink it, He will enable you to say, "Not my will, but thine be done"; He will send His angels to strengthen you, till nature sinks in the conflict; and then you may hear Him whisper, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee: for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." And when you ascend from the Jordan of death, to the heavenly Canaan—the promised rest, the paradise of God, and there enter upon the joys provided for you from the foundation of the world, your perplexity will cease in regard to the way you have been led, and you will see how all things, even the most untoward events, conspired to bring you to your glorious seat; and you will not want for motives to join in the celestial song, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

§ 8. Rev. Rodney A. Miller.

Mr. Joseph Whiting was invited to be the immediate successor of Mr. Hull, the 16th of November, 1826. The vote, however was not sufficiently unanimous to induce him to accede to the invitation. In 1827, the church and parish united in calling the Rev. Rodney A. Miller to become their pastor and teacher. He accepted their call, and was ordained over them June 7th, of that year. The public services of the ordination were performed by the following ministers of the Gospel: Rev. Edward Beecher of Boston, invoked the divine blessing; Rev. Warren Fay of Charlestown, preached the sermon; Rev. Micah Stone of Brookfield, offered the ordaining prayer; the charge was given by Rev. Thomas Snell of North Brookfield; Rev. George Allen of Shrewsbury presented the right hand of fellowship; Rev. John Fiske of New-Braintree addressed the people; and Rev. Dr. Codman of Dorchester closed the services with prayer.

Mr. Miller is a native of Troy, New York. He was graduated at Union College, in 1821. The study of theology he pursued in the Theological Seminary in Princeton, N. J. He was pastor of the First Church in Worcester, nearly seventeen years. Unusual religious attention was apparent in the church and society soon after he commenced his labors with them, the result of which was a considerable addition to the church. In 1830 a Temperance Association was formed in this society, and Mr. Miller was elected its president. This was the first association of the kind formed in Worcester. Its members pledged

themselves to total abstinence from *ardent* spirits. The movement encountered a decided opposition, and required no faltering resolution to carry it through.

During these seventeen years, five seasons of special religious interest were enjoyed, in three of which quite a large number of individuals professed to have met with a decided change in their religious views and feelings. On one occasion, seventy-three individuals united with the church by a public profession of their faith; on another, seventy. The whole number who, in the course of this ministry, expressed a hope that they had experienced the renovating influence of the divine Spirit, exceeded four hundred.

Some difficulties having arisen between Mr. Miller and members of the church and society, a mutual council was invited to deliberate and give advice respecting them. The council convened in pursuance of letters missive, and, after protracted deliberation concerning the subject-matter of misunderstanding, advised that the pastoral relation be dissolved. Mr. Miller was accordingly dismissed, April 12, 1844. The following testimonial was given him by the council:

"The council would hereby recommend the Rev. Rodney A. Miller to the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ as a sound theologian, and an able and faithful minister of the Gospel. From personal and intimate acquaintance with him, they are satisfied that his literary attainments, the purity of his life and his consecration to the work of the ministry, justly entitle him to the respect and confidence of the Christian community." JOSHUA BATES, Moderator.

WM. P. PAINE, Scribe.

§ 9. Rev. George P. Smith.

In less than one year after the dismission of Mr. Miller, the First Church and Parish were happily united in the installation of his successor. The Rev. George P. Smith, a native of Salem, was graduated at Amherst College in the class of 1835. He pursued the studies preparatory to his professional life in the Seminary at Andover, and completed his course in that institution in 1840. June 17, 1841, he was ordained over the church in South Woburn. Between three and four years, he successfully performed the duties of the pastoral office in that place. Invited to occupy a wider field of labor, he left South Woburn early in the year 1845, and in March 19th of that year, was installed the eighth pastor of the First Church in Worcester. The public services of the Installation were thus performed:

Introductory prayer, by the Rev. Mr. Bennet of Woburn; Sermon, by the Rev. Thomas Snell, D. D. of North Brookfield; Consecrating prayer, by the Rev. Horatio Bardwell of Oxford; Charge to the Pastor, by the Rev. John Nelson, D. D. of Leicester; Right Hand of Fellowship, by the Rev. E. Smalley of Worcester; Concluding prayer by the Rev. Mr. Bullard of Fitchburg.

This connection has been a happy one from the first. During Mr. Smith's ministry, the church and society have increased in numbers and strength. He has been to them a very acceptable pastor and teacher, and his labors among them 'have not been in vain in the Lord.' The present state of things characterized by harmony and enterprise, is

full of promise for the future. But few fields of labor are more inviting to a Christian minister than this; but few clergymen occupy a position combining so many facilities for usefulness and enjoyment, as the present incumbent in office here.

The reader now has before him a brief history of the origin and progress of the First Church in Worcester, together with an account of its successive pastors. At several points in this history, the temptation has been strong to linger for hours where we could remain but moments, and take a much wider survey than the limits of our work would permit. Incessant care has been needful in order to give, with the requisite brevity, any thing like a clear and comprehensive statement of the facts belonging to the subject. The struggles of the early settlers; their sacrifices and reverses, their heroic efforts for themselves and large forecast for those who should succeed them; the early and persevering attention to, and provision for the education of children and the institutions of religion; the different stages of progress in social life and religious customs; the steadfast attachment manifested for the Christian ministry, under disappointment of hopes and unanticipated discouragements; the character of the several pastors, their efforts among the people, the unity of their sentiments and aims, with the diversity of their temperaments and modes of action; these, and their associated topics cannot but have a deep interest, not only for the present members of the First Parish, but for all who have gone thence to other connections, and indeed for our whole community. Though so little is known of the first two pastors of the church, and we can gather nothing of their immediate mental products from the most

diligent research, yet it is gratifying that they are not altogether unknown. While we would know much more, we are glad to know something respecting them.

Mr. Maccarty, Dr. Austin and Mr. Hull are no longer with us, but they are spoken of with interest; they also speak to us, and their memory is yet fragrant. Were our mental vision sufficiently clear and perspicacious to discern the hidden processes of mental formations, had we skill to untwist the cords of intellectual influence and detect the nature of each fibre, we might even now identify the hand and the heart of each of these pastors in the moral qualities and spiritual growth of the church. "The king never dies." Government goes on, though he who had administered it, sleeps with the dead. "The minister of the Gospel never dies." He may go to his account, but his influence is felt long after the grass becomes green upon his grave. The causes which he has put in operation will reach a distant age. The parents who have received the impress of his mind and heart, will reproduce it on the minds of their children and children's children. His power may be unrecognized; but many will feel, who neither appreciate nor perceive it. "The glory of children are their fathers," and every church is honored in having had an able and faithful ministry. The First Church in Worcester has been greatly favored from its earliest beginnings, and the prospect of its continued prosperity and usefulness was perhaps never more promising than at the present time. The prayers that have ascended to heaven from this body of worshipers for five or six successive generations, that the church might be blessed and be a blessing from age to age, seem to have 'prevailed,' and even now

to be 'prevailing with God.' The truths which have here been preached, from 1719 to 1851, are still precious to the saints, and are found to be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness." Perhaps the following extract from a record of great antiquity and surpassing interest, will form no unapt conclusion to this portion of the present volume. "*And Isaac digged again the wells of water which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing* [*living*] *waters.*"

CHAPTER III.

Second Church and its Ministry.

§ 1. *Formation of the Church.*

Previously to 1785, there was but one religious society in Worcester.* The population of the town at that period was nearly 2,000.† One meeting-house accommodated all who were disposed to attend public worship on the Sabbath, and the same clergyman had ministered to them for thirty-seven years. Doubtless there were differences of religious opinion; these had been exhibited to some extent;‡ still no measures had been taken toward the formation of a new religious society.

During the illness of Mr. Maccarty which prevented him from supplying his pulpit for some years before his decease, different clergymen were employed to preach in his stead. In July of the year preceding his death, the purpose was entertained by the town of giving him the aid of a colleague. It was voted to hear candidates with the view of completing such an arrangement. The gentleman first employed in pursuance of this resolve, to officiate as

* Perhaps a slight exception should be made to the statement in the text. Soon after 1719 the Scotch emigrants who had come hither, formed a Presbyterian church and maintained separate worship. A brief account of this church will be found in the last chapter of this volume.

† In 1776, it was 1925.

‡ "The town was a scene of disputes all the time I lived there."—*Pres. Adams' Letter.*

candidate, was Mr. Aaron Bancroft. He completed his first engagement to the town in Sept. 1783. The pastor had then so far recovered his health, that he was able, for a few months, to resume the performance of his accustomed duties. But his labors on earth were evidently drawing to a close, and his death left the pulpit vacant in July of 1784. In October of that year, and in January of the following, Mr. Bancroft was again invited by the town to officiate for several Sabbaths. His services were highly acceptable to individuals, but not to a majority of the people. His friends, desirous of procuring his settlement, and apprehending that it would be impracticable to obtain unanimity in his favor, proposed to the town that he should be ordained as a minister of the Gospel in Worcester, that those who were dissatisfied with his religious views, should introduce a colleague entirely acceptable to themselves, and that the salaries of both clergymen should be paid from the common treasury. This proposition was submitted to the town at their meeting in March, 1785, but the majority voted against it.* The motion was then made, "Inasmuch as the town by their last vote have refused to settle Mr. Bancroft as a minister, that the town will consent that those persons who are satisfied with Mr. Bancroft, and desirous of settling him, may form into a religious society for that purpose; and the question being put, it passed in the negative."

It was now sufficiently apparent that discordant views of Christian doctrine prevailed among the inhabitants, and that no efforts to unite them in the settlement of the same minister would be successful. The opposition to Mr. Bancroft

* See Dr. Bancroft's Discourse preached April 8th, 1827, p. 13.

arose solely from diversity of religious sentiments, and not from any objection to his character as a man or his ability as a preacher.* The minority, therefore, soon reached the conclusion and began to act upon it, that it would be better to form a new association and maintain separate worship in peace and to edification, than remain with the old parish and contend for superiority. They accordingly withdrew from the religious society to which the law had bound them, and in a memorial to the Legislature thus gave their reasons for the act. 'Town meeting after town meeting was productive of heat, contention, and unchristian struggles for a major vote: the division reached in its influence to private affairs, and to the civil and prudential concerns of the town. Under these circumstances, seeing no prospect of union, desirous of a minister whose sentiments they approved, wishing the same indulgence to those who differed from them, weary of unprofitable contention, and finding every thing was to be carried by a major vote, without any attention to the wishes and feelings of the minor part, your petitioners, judging it for the peace and happiness of the town, by a separation to put an end to disputes that might embroil for years, withdrew.'†

The new association was formed in March, 1785. It was composed of sixty-seven men,‡ who covenanted togeth-

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* Judge Lincoln, chairman of the parish Committee, when asked by the chairman of the Legislative Committee appointed to report on the petition for an act of incorporation, why the town of Worcester should be divided, replied, 'The majority of our inhabitants are rigid Calvinists, the petitioners are rank Arminians.'—*Dr. Bancroft's semi-centennial Discourse, p.* 41.

† Lin. Hist. p. 195.

‡ "Most of these were heads of families, and among them was a large proportion of the professional and distinguished men of the town, and a fair proportion of farmers and mechanics."—*Dr. Bancroft's semi-centennial Discourse, p.* 19.

er to support public worship in an organized society, and agreed to procure an act of incorporation as soon as practicable, to invite Mr. Bancroft to become their minister, and to pay him their respective proportions of £150 annually, according to the town rates, as his salary.

The movement was regarded as a bold innovation on the usages of the times.* Before that period, 'the inland parishes of the State had been defined by geographical boundaries.' Except in the metropolis, all the inhabitants within the limits of a given precinct, were connected by existing laws with the established religious society. They were expected to worship with it, and aid in its support. If any were remiss in the duty of public worship, they might not on that account anticipate freedom from taxation. Such an arrangement was supposed to contribute to the public welfare; and neither private convenience nor private opinions were permitted to interfere with it. Of course the new association in Worcester met with a determined resistance. Influences many and powerful were arrayed against so radical an innovation in parochial affairs. Still the friends of the enterprise persevered in their attempt, and, although compelled to pay their assessment for the support of the first society, yet maintained separate worship. What they demanded, was, for a season denied them; but perseverance at length was crowned with success, and the law enacted that any person might go from one religious society to another, by leaving his name for that purpose with the town clerk.

* "This was, I believe, the first example of a poll parish in any inland town of the Commonwealth, and public prejudice against it was violent."—*Dr. B's. Sermon*, 1827, *p.* 13.

Religious meetings, commenced in the Court House in 1785, continued to be held there until the first of January, 1792. Soon after the formation of the society, a church was organized,* and a minister invited to settle with them. The manner of forming the church is thus detailed by Dr. Bancroft. "A church was to be gathered in the new society, and in doing it difficulties were to be encountered. The method adopted follows. A church covenant was composed, and circulated among the families of the society. Due time having been given for its examination, a public lecture was appointed, and two clergymen were invited to attend this lecture, assist in forming the church, and join in imploring the blessing of heaven upon it. They both declined the service. The pastor elect delivered a sermon, in which he delineated the constitution of a Christian church, and explained the nature and design of the Lord's Supper: the covenant was then read, and as many as were disposed in presence of the assembly signed it. In this manner was our church formed."†

The ordination of the minister took place, February 1st, 1786; and, though much had been accomplished towards the purpose contemplated by the new society, serious difficulties still remained.‡ At length, Nov. 13th, 1787, they

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* See Appendix G.

† "The members of the old church, who joined the new Society, had applied to that body for a dismission, and their request had been denied; their case was, therefore, presented to the consideration of the ordaining council. The council advised the newly organized church not formally to admit the members from the old church into their body, but by a special vote to grant them all the privileges of members in regular standing. This was done."—*Dr. B's. Discourse, Ap.* 8, 1827.

‡ "The present members of the society can have no adequate conception of the embarrassment and difficulty, which attended the first years of its

were incorporated by the Legislature as a distinct society, and relieved of the burden of contributing to the support of that with which they were formerly connected. After this Act of the Legislature, the First Parish had a legal existence separate from the municipal incorporation, and the support of worship was provided for, not by a general meeting of the inhabitants, but in parochial meetings.

In 1789, it was voted to erect a house for public worship, provided it should involve no expense to the corporation. The enterprise met with favor. The location decided upon was a little south of the Antiquarian Hall; and the work was commenced. January 1st, 1792, the house* was dedicated. The sermon on the occasion, was preached by the Rev. Zabdiel Adams of Lunenburg. With this brief history of the formation of the Second Society, we pass to a succinct sketch of its first minister, the

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existence. They know not the price that was paid for the privileges transmitted to them; they will not too highly venerate the character of those who bore the heat and burden of the day."—*Dr. Bancroft's semi-centennial Discourse, p.* 19.

* 'The first meeting-house of the Second Congregational Society, near Antiquarian Hall, on Summer street, was built by Ignatius Goulding and Elias Blake, on land given to the parish, June 16, 1791, by Charles and Samuel Chandler. It was a plain and neat edifice of wood. A bell was purchased, and a town clock presented by Isaiah Thomas, Esq; both afterwards removed to the brick house on Main st.'—*Lin. Hist. p.* 347. The old house is still standing. Occupied for several years as a house of public entertainment, in 1847 it was purchased by the town for a purpose more in accordance with its original design, and has since been used as a school-house.

§ 2. Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D. D.

He was invited to become their minister, June 7th, 1785, and ordained over them, Feb. 1st, 1786. The order of exercises on that occasion was as follows:

Introductory prayer, by the Rev. Simeon Howard, D.D. of Boston; Sermon, by the Rev. Thomas Barnard of Salem; Charge, by the Rev. Timothy Harrington of Lancaster; Right Hand of Fellowship, by the Rev. Zabdiel Adams of Lunenburg; Closing Prayer, by the Rev. John Lathrop, D. D. of Boston; Benediction, by the Rev. Timothy Hilliard, of Cambridge.

Dr. Bancroft, a native of Reading, Mass., was born Nov. 10th, 1755. His father, Samuel Bancroft, was an extensive landholder, and a useful and highly respected citizen. He was an exemplary Christian and an officer in the church. A member of the council that dismissed the Rev. Jonathan Edwards from Northampton, he, with his pastor the Rev. William Hobby, protested against the decision of the majority. The sermon preached at his funeral, represents him as a man of "distinguished abilities, of great benevolence and compassion." He regarded agricultural pursuits as furnishing the most desirable employment for his children, in seasons of political agitation, but on the whole did not resist the inclination of his son for a public education. Young Bancroft, intent on his purpose, made diligent use of such helps as his native town afforded, to prepare himself for college. At the age of nineteen, he entered Harvard. The year following, the

students were dispersed by the presence of war; and though called together in the autumn of that year, they were not allowed to reassemble at Cambridge, until March, 1776. His whole collegiate course was much embarrassed by the din of arms that arose round the halls of the University. The officers of instruction were intensely engaged in the stirring events that agitated the whole country, and, of course, could not devote that attention to the improvement of the students, which, in other circumstances, would have been practicable. Making the best of the advantages afforded him, Mr. Bancroft honorably completed the term of College life, and was graduated in 1778. Having taught school in Cambridge for a few months, he began the study of theology with the Rev. Mr. Haven, the clergyman of his father's parish.* He first commenced preaching in the autumn af 1779. In the spring of 1780, he visited the province of Nova Scotia. He was absent from his native State about three years. On his return he was immediately invited to preach in Worcester. Here, though not acceptable to the majority of the people, he produced favorable impressions on some of the leading minds of the place, and made warm friends. When Mr. Maccarty temporarily resumed his duties, Mr. Bancroft, having completed his engagement here, preached in several other places. In 1784, he declined an invitation to settle over a church in the part of Stoughton now called Canton. Influential members in the society of Sandwich would gladly have called him to labor in that place, but he could not

* Mr. Haven 'was a man of fine intellect, liberal in his sentiments, and a sound, if not a learned theologian. In every sense he was a worthy and good man.'—*Testimony of Dr. Bancroft.*

yield to their wishes. Returning to Worcester in January, 1785, he placed himself at the disposal of those who invited him; and, though his preaching did not win the assent of the many, it greatly increased the attachment of his admirers. A secession from the First Society having formed a voluntary association for the support of public worship, Mr. Bancroft, having supplied them till Feb. 1786, was then ordained their minister. Devoting himself to their service with his characteristic energy and decision, he labored with them as their only minister till 1827, and then as senior pastor till 1839.

In the early part of his ministry here, he found many obstacles to contend with. His peculiar doctrinal belief, openly avowed, was a bar to ministerial exchanges and fellowship in the neighborhood. With rare exceptions, he preached nearly the whole time for his own people, during several years. Rev. Mr. Adams of Lunenburg, and Rev. Mr. Harrington of Lancaster, were the only clergymen in the vicinity who were free to exchange pulpits with him. He stood almost alone in a large county; but he was firm and steadfast. Straitened pecuniary circumstances also involved trials of his faith and patience.* When the soci-

* Mr. Bancroft was united in marriage to Miss Lucretia, daughter of Judge John Chandler, Oct. 1786. "Rarely has a woman from a family of plenty, so readily conformed to a change of worldly condition, so cheerfully sustained the straitened circumstances of a family, or so perseveringly and effectually labored for its support, as she has done."—*Testimony of her husband.*

"And if you ask by what principle she was governed? I answer, it was a religious principle; for none but a religious principle would enable her to be and do what she was and did. In her retirement she walked with God; and when the storm and the seas roared around her, in her ark she floated in security, and found tranquillity and peace."—*Rev. Mr. Hill's Discourse.*

She died April 27, 1839, nearly 74 years of age, having lived in the married

ety voted, in 1789, to build a house of worship, he voluntarily relinquished one third of his salary, not because the whole of it was any more than sufficient to afford him a comfortable support, but because he chose to bear a proportional part of all burdens.* Some years, in order to supply the deficiencies of an inadequate salary, he gave instruction to young men and to daughters of his parishioners, and received boarders into his family. A man of less moral courage would have shrunk from the difficulties which he encountered, and sought a field of labor demanding more exercise of the milder, and less of the sterner elements of our nature. None more readily than those whom he served so faithfully, acknowledge that to his firmness of purpose and self-sacrificing devotion, the Second Society owes its harmony and prosperity. He labored, not only for the present, but the future. He had the perspicacity to discern

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state more than fifty-two years. Of her thirteen children, but six outlived the mother.

On the east side of her husband's monument is the following testimonial to her worth:

Here rest
the mortal remains of
LUCRETIA BANCROFT,
daughter of Judge John and Mary Church Chandler,
born June 9, A. D. 1765;
married to Rev. Dr. Bancroft, October 21, A. D. 1786,
died April 27, A. D. 1839.
With zealous and untiring sympathy,
she shared and relieved the pious labors of her husband,
and was not long separated from him by an earlier summons to her reward.
Her ardent friendship, her active benevolence,
her many virtues, and her efforts and sacrifices for the welfare
of the Second Parish in Worcester,
should ever be held in grateful remembrance.

* Second Parish Records.

distant results from present embarrassments and sufferings, and strength of resolution to persevere in a course which, through multiplied trials, was sure to lead to a brighter day. In providing for his necessities and carrying into effect the plan which he had marked out for himself, he was no stranger to literary labors.

In 1807, his 'Life of Washington' was given to the public. Having made himself familiar with his theme and its illustrative history, he embodied his thoughts in a style so perspicuous and popular, and drew out his narrative with such fidelity to facts, that it was received with great favor. It had a rapid sale from its first appearance; and, in 1826, it was stereotyped in two volumes, 12mo, and published in Boston, as one of the series of the Bedlington Cabinet Library. Gratified as was the author with the success of his work in his own country, he must have been particularly pleased to receive a copy of it from a London publisher, who had republished it in the commercial metropolis of the world. The Life is yet in considerable demand, and many highly prize it as a memento of its author.

Dr. Bancroft preached a series of sermons on Christian doctrines in 1821. They awakened great interest among his people, and were forthwith solicited for the press. The author yielded to the solicitation; and in 1822, a volume of 'Sermons on the Doctrines of the Gospel, 8vo. pp. 429,' was given to the Christian public. To his own denomination, these discourses gave great satisfaction; and many, who entirely dissented from the doctrines inculcated, yet gave the writer credit for the boldness with which he assumed his positions, and the independence with which he

maintained them. President John Adams, to whom the volume of discourses had been transmitted by the author, thus writes to him, under date of Jan. 24th, 1823. "I thank you for your kind letter of Dec. 30th, and above all, for the gift of a precious volume. It is a chain of diamonds set in links of gold. I have never read, nor heard read, a volume of sermons better calculated and adapted to the age and country in which it was written. I have conversed freely with most of the sects in America, and have not been inattentive to the writings and reasonings of all denominations of Christians and philosophers; but after all, I declare to you, that your twenty-nine sermons have expressed the result of all my reading, experience, and reflections, in a manner more satisfactory to me, than I could have done in the best days of my strength." Thirty-six different publications issued from the press, during his life, from the pen of Dr. Bancroft.* The last was a 'Sermon on the termination of fifty years of his ministry, Jan. 31st, 1836.' It contains an interesting review of his own history, and that of the Second Society. In 1810, Harvard University conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. For thirty years, he was a member of the Board of Trustees of Leicester Academy—many years its President. He was President of the Worcester County Bible Society; of the American Unitarian Association, from its organization in 1825 to 1836; and of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Piety, and Charity. He was Vice-President of the Worcester and Middlesex Missionary Society, afterwards merged in the Evangelical Missionary Society; and of the American Antiquarian Society from

* For a list of these publications, see Lin. Hist. Worcester, p. 203.

1816 to 1832. He was also Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Full of days and of honors, he departed this life, August 19th, 1839, nearly eighty-four years of age.

This brief narrative of the principal events in the life of Dr. Bancroft, sufficiently indicates that he occupied a commanding position in society, and that he was well qualified for his place. His character was strongly marked and admirably balanced.

Endowed by his Creator with superior powers of mind, he diligently gave himself to their cultivation. Considering the disadvantages of his early training, it is remarkable that he reached such excellence of general scholarship. "His information on most subjects was exact. His knowledge of history, especially that of our own country, was extensive. He was at one period familiar with the classics, retained an acquaintance with them to an advanced period of life and readily quoted his favorite authors. Still he placed the standard of excellence so high, that he ever spoke of his early education as very imperfect and subjecting him, through life, to great inconvenience."*

In the exercise of the social affections, Dr. Bancroft was warm and genial. Of his own family, he was not only the guide and master, but also the light and joy. For his friends, he had always an open door, a warm grasp of the hand, and a warmer heart behind it. The sterner duties of his life, so far from drying up the sympathies of his nature, induced him to place a higher value on the interchange of the social feelings and the sweet ministry of friendship. Gifted with unusual conversational powers, at

* Rev. Mr. Hill's Sermon, at the interment of Dr. Bancroft.

the same time knowing how to listen as well as speak, he was at once the entertaining and instructive companion, the agreeable and welcome visitant in cultivated society. Highly as his people valued him as a guide and teacher, they were particularly attached to him as a friend. Their hearts warmed to him in this relation, and when he was removed from them, a prominent sense of their mourning was, "that a tried friend, who made our welfare his own, will no longer sympathize with us in the vicissitudes of human life."* His brethren in the ministry too were similarly affected. In their Letter of condolence to the bereaved family, they say, "We mourn with you that the light which has shone so long with undiminished lustre at the domestic altar and fireside, is extinguished. We mourn that we shall no more be welcomed with that benignant smile and friendly grasp with which we have been greeted, whenever and wherever we have met."†

Benevolence was a prominent trait in the character of Dr. Bancroft. 'He looked not only on his own, but also on the things of others.' He had an open hand for the needy, and often denied himself to afford them relief. When he deemed it necessary, he could relinquish a considerable part of his salary to help his people bear their burdens. Nor was his generous bearing restricted by the limits of his own society. His liberal heart devised liberal things for the cause of education‡ and good morals, both here and elsewhere. If his pecuniary contributions were

* Mr. Hill's Discourse, p. 37.

† Mr. Hill's Discourse, p. 36.

‡ "His long continued and persevering exertions in the cause of education, contributed greatly to the introduction of the improved school system in the town."—*Lin. Hist. p.* 205.

at times necessarily limited, he gave freely what was quite as essential—his wise counsels and his time. He valued benevolence in emotion and intention; he valued it still more when it took the form of generous action.

Candor was also a noticeable feature in the character of Dr. Bancroft. His bearing towards friends and enemies was frank and manly. If he disagreed with you, he did not disguise it; if on your side, he left you in no doubt of it. "No man was ever more frank and open than he. There was a truthfulness and consistency about him which immediately impressed the mind. His tongue was the index of his heart. There were no subterfuges—no double dealings with him. He was ever regarded a fair and manly opponent, who scorned to resort to petty artifice, and seize on unworthy measures."*

He was truly a *brave man*. A coward, whether moral or physical, would never have conceived the bold measures which he adopted, or have carried them into effect had they been suggested by others. Thinking for himself on all subjects of interest or hope, he was neither ashamed nor afraid to avow his sentiments on all proper occasions. If the many around him disagreed with, opposed, contended with, or maligned him, it caused him not to swerve one hair's breadth from what he believed to be the line of truth and duty. In the early part of his ministry, he encountered serious obstacles, and had much to try his faith and his temper. A timid man would have shrunk appalled from the difficulties which he met with undaunted brow, or been overborne in a struggle which he waged with unfaltering resolution.

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* Mr. Hill's Discourse, p. 16.

Nor was it moral courage alone which distinguished him. He was not wanting in that physical daring which characterizes the soldier. The battle of Lexington occurred during one of his vacations. The din of arms roused his energies for the conflict, as the trump of battle stirs the mettle of the war-steed. Shouldering his musket, he marched forthwith as a volunteer to Cambridge. At a later day, when, in the insurrection of Shays, Worcester was in the possession of rebel forces, and many families were affording a cumpulsory hospitality to the officers, Dr. Bancroft, strongly opposed to the whole movement, fortified the house where he resided, against any such intrusion. Free as air in his hospitality on all proper occasions, he was not to be forced to show hospitable intentions on improper occasions. Having barred the doors of his house, he took his position without as guard of his own castle. Presently a company of officers was seen riding towards his dwelling. Standing on no nice ceremony, they demanded for themselves shelter—'aid and comfort.' It was peremptorily refused. The bold man told them to their face that they were rebels, and added, 'If you enter this house, you must go over my dead body.' Such daring heroism saved his home from the profanation he would not permit.* But the bravery of Dr. Bancroft was not rash.

* An instance of his presence of mind and calm intrepidity is thus related. At a distance of three miles from home, on a dark evening, he found that the horse he was driving, owing to some carelessness in the adjustment of the bit, was entirely beyond his control. Mrs. Bancroft was with him, and the horse, with his head towards the stable, having started with a sudden spring, was constantly accelerating his speed. He knew not what might cause the animal to swerve from the strait path the next instant, or how suddenly his companion and himself might be thrown from the vehicle seriously injured, or even meet with a violent death. When his wife caught hold of him in her

He was no less *discreet* than courageous. His zeal was tempered with knowledge. If his impulses were strong, he had wisdom and force of character enough to put them under the control of judgment. In the management of difficult cases he showed resolution and perseverance not only, but a rare prudence as well.* Watched ever so closely, it was not easy to catch him tripping.† If an opponent, in the heat of controversy, gave him an advantage, he, cool and wary, was quick to perceive, and prompt to avail himself of it. Though constitutionally ardent in temperament, he had disciplined himself to an admirable self-control; and though a man of quick and strong passion, a resolute will suppressed all indiscreet outbursts. Internal agitation might be noticed by the electric eye-flash; but when he spoke, his words were well chosen and becomingly

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sudden fear, he calmly told her that the safety of both might depend on his being left free and unembarrassed. When she would have sprung from him to the ground, he gently but firmly restrained her. With too much good sense and presence of mind to jump himself or suffer her to jump from the carriage, he exerted himself to the utmost to keep the horse in the middle of the road, and meanwhile calmly conversed with his wife to quiet and re-assure her. The unchecked animal whirled them upon a full run to the stable. Providence suffered no harm to befall them.

* His presence was often sought in councils called to advise in cases of difficulty. In these ecclesiastical bodies, this trait of his character was conspicuous. Though mingling freely in debate, he always managed to keep his temper, let provocations arise as they would. Perhaps he never appeared to greater advantage than when, in advisory councils, his clear statements and dispassionate, manly appeals, conducted his associate advisers to judicious and harmonizing decisions.

† "Well, Mr. Bancroft, what do you think the people of the old society say of you now?" asked one of his parishioners. "Something good, I hope," was the reply. "Why, they say it is time to let you alone; for if they find fault with you, you do not regard it, and if they praise you, you do not mind it, but keep steadily on in your own way."—*Im. His. p.* 203.

uttered. Few men have lived so long and encountered such trials as he did, and yet been betrayed into so few imprudent words or indiscreet actions. In his severest controversies, an opponent could rarely if ever provoke him to utter an angry or ill-advised word. His self-possession, courteous and wise bearing, secured respect for his character, even when they failed to win assent for his opinions.*

Another trait in the character of Dr. Bancroft, was *fortitude*. He could not only brave danger, but 'endure hardness, as a good soldier.' The trying occurrences of his early ministry, at times, produced great depression of spirits, so that he was tempted to yield to circumstances and give up the contest.† But firmly believing that he was engaged in the cause of truth—the cause of God, he patiently endured all the suffering which persistence in that cause involved. His greatest trials, however, were not without. His heart was often lacerated by domestic privations and bereavements. To a spirit so benevolent as his, how severe must have been the trial of such an abridgment of hospitalities and charitable offices as his straitened circumstances demanded. "He has told us of the humiliations and straights to which he was driven;—of his struggles to maintain a decent hospitality. But he has not told of his domestic bereavements, of the early separation of his children, of his hopes in their expected aid, of their death under circumstances, strange, heart-rending, and full of wo. Nor has he told us of the entire resignation, the fortitude,

* "From a supposed sense of duty I have been constrained to engage in public controversy oftener than was pleasant; but my opponents have always regarded my reputation; and to my knowledge my moral character has not been impeached."—*Dr. Bancroft's Sermon, delivered Jan. 31st*, 1836.

† Ibid. p. 21.

the cheerfulness, the calm trust in God, with which all this was borne; that while the paternal heart was wrung with anxiety, disappointment and grief, he maintained his wonted serenity, asking no remission of his labors, locking his sufferings within his own breast, checking no one's joy by the expression of his sorrows."*

Dr. Bancroft was highly esteemed for his *conscientiousness and integrity*. How far soever he carried prudence, he never would hold it up as a screen for a wrong act, or an excuse for the utterance of an untruth. Too candid to conceal what he ought to avow, he had too much integrity to deny what justice required him to confess. The maxim that the end sanctifies the means—that we may lawfully do evil for the purposes of good, was as repugnant to his feelings, as it was discordant with the decisions of his conscience. Having clearly ascertained the path of duty, he would walk therein, whether it conducted him through flowers or thorns. It was this adherence to the right, this incorruptible integrity which gave him influence while he lived, and hallows his remembrance now that he is no more with us.

Of his more distinctively *religious experience*, it may not be easy to give a clear analysis. He evidently had a deep reverence for the Supreme Being. Though he could not bring his mind to embrace, in all respects, the religion of his fathers, and though some of the Calvinistic doctrines were among the sentiments which he could not relish—hardly endure, he yet laid great stress upon the importance of a holy life, and preached 'repentance towards God, and

* Mr. Hill's Discourse, p. 18.

faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.'* He did not claim the merit of sinless obedience himself, nor did he predicate it of others. Not unfrequently did he acknowledge his imperfections, and express his trust in the mercy of God. He gave utterance to his joy in the last sermon that he ever published, "that many, many around us, who bear the Christian name, are actuated by the highest and purest motives, love to God, a love to the Saviour, and a love to duty." One, whose Christian experience gave him the greatest pleasure, and who on his death bed acknowledged that he was principally indebted to Dr. Bancroft, under God, for all there was hopeful and peaceful in his state of mind, thus expressed himself: "During my sufferings I never felt despondency; my dependence on the mercy of God in Jesus Christ has sustained me; and a confirmed hope of happiness beyond the grave has enabled me patiently to bear my severe distress." His own testimony, as the moment of his departure drew nigh, was, "We cannot bid adieu to the scenes and objects we have loved on earth without pain; and the thought that we are to appear before the judgment-seat of God and account for the deeds done in the body, renders the contemplation of that event awful in the extreme. But I trust in the mercy of God, who has promised never to forsake those who put their trust in Him. I have studied the Bible to obtain a knowledge

* "The Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism was early taught me. While young, I was, by my father, appointed reader to the family on Saturday evenings, and Willard's Body of Divinity, a large folio, was selected as my book. The Catechism I never understood or loved; my mind revolted against Willard, I could not assent to the popular creed, and I well remember the throes of my youthful mind when dwelling upon religious subjects."
Mr. Hill's Discourse, p. 29.

of His character, and what he reveals through Jesus our Saviour, of the destiny of man. I think I may without vanity say, I have endeavored to make the precepts of the Gospel the rule of my life and conversation; and my aim has been to perform the duties assigned me by my heavenly Father to the best of my ability. I have not the presumption to claim the merit of sinless obedience; but this I do say, my intentions have ever been to conform as far as in my power, to the bright example set before us by our blessed Saviour. Death is the portal through which all must pass to reach their home in the heavens; and the Gospel alone sheds light on its passage. Happy are they who shall sleep in Jesus."* With the expression of such sentiments upon his lips, and a calm joy in his heart he passed away and went to his account. Whether we agree or disagree with him in doctrinal belief, we can cheerfully accord to him the possession of many virtues, and a character of rare excellence. Though his views of the atonement and of the peculiar mode in which God shews mercy to sinners, were not in accordance with those distinctively called 'evangelical,' and though many will wish that, as he believed in the pre-existence of Jesus, he had also clothed Him with the attributes of an *Almighty* Saviour, yet it is interesting to know that he placed great dependence on the mercy of God in Christ, and thought so much of the happiness of those who "sleep in Jesus." It is pleasant to believe that he himself thus sleeps, and that he has already commenced that sublime ascription of praise in which all the redeemed will eventually join;—"Blessing, and honor, and glory, and

* Mr. Hill's Sermon, p. 22.

power, be unto Him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever."

The monument which affection and veneration have reared to the memory of Dr. Bancroft, bears the following inscription :

On the front or North side.

HERE REST
THE MORTAL REMAINS OF
REV. AARON BANCROFT, D. D.,
BORN IN READING,
NOVEMBER 10, A. D. 1755.
ORDAINED PASTOR OF THE
SECOND PARISH IN WORCESTER,
FEBRUARY 1, A. D. 1785.
HIS SPIRIT ASCENDED TO GOD WHO GAVE IT,
AUGUST 19, A. D. 1839.

On the West side.

In honor and gratitude
to a devoted Pastor,
Who gathered a little flock
of Christian worshipers
in days of opposition, straits and trials,
vindicating for them
the glorious freedom to worship the one God,
according to the teachings and example
of the blessed Saviour,
giving them union, strength and increase,
by his labors and his life,
in a ministry of fifty-three years,
the Second Parish in Worcester
erect this monument.

On the rear.

A spirit free to concede as to claim
its dearest treasure, Christian liberty;
fearlessness in thought and duty;
ready and various powers
of learning and observation;
a clear and forcible expression;
an ardent temper
subdued to the calmness of Christian philosophy;
uniform prudence in council and action;
a warm heart and courteous manners;
and devoted fidelity in all relations
of public and private life
gave to our revered Pastor
a moral power,
which extended to a large circle
beyond those, whose happiness it was
to know him best and love him most.

What remains to us in the contemplation of Dr. Bancroft's character, is that special relation in which he illustrates the 'Worcester Pulpit.' His style of sermonizing was distinguished for clearness, while it did not lack terseness and force. The arrangement of his thoughts was nicely adjusted, his statements well considered and precise, his arguments logical, his illustrations well chosen and often beautiful. Of course there were exceptions to these statements; but they are sufficiently accurate for a general description. His personal appearance in the pulpit was serious, unassuming, becoming. His manner was rarely impassioned, yet far from cold or formal. It was unaffected

in its simplicity, and earnest in its decorum. Those who listened to the tones of his voice, could not doubt that beneath the calm exterior there was a living spirit, moving, throbbing, and sometimes burning. His manner in public prayer was peculiar. He did not close his eyes.* In sentiment he was explicitly Unitarian, and yet he would have been among the last to accept some of the pantheistic conclusions which have been baptized as Unitarian, or to endure that nominally Unitarian preaching which denies the distinctive inspiration of the New Testament, and converts the teachings of the Evangelists into a myth. He professed a 'firm belief of the holy Scriptures, contained in the Old and New Testaments, and received them as his sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice.'† Such was his reverence for the Bible, that it pained him to hear any one speak lightly of it. When he read the Scriptures, he felt that they were written by 'holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit;' and when he quoted from them, he believed that they were the 'lively oracles' of Jehovah.

* This peculiarity was noticed by some of the keenly-observing patients, when he officiated at the Lunatic Asylum. Two of them conversing upon the subject, expressed gratification with his services; and then one observed that the Dr. always prayed with his eyes open. The other replied, 'I like that; *it looks more sociable.*'

† Dr. Bancroft's Discourse, preached April 8th, 1827.

JESUS CHRIST THE MINISTER OF GOD

IN THE

SALVATION OF MEN:

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED TO THE

SECOND CHURCH IN WORCESTER,

BY THE

REV. AARON BANCROFT, D. D.

NOTE.

This sermon was written and preached when its author was seventy-seven years of age. It will be recognized by those who once listened to his voice as containing those thoughts on which he was wont to dwell with much interest, and exhibiting those qualities of style which marked his performances in the maturity of his strength. Two or three verbal alterations excepted, it is submitted to the reader's inspection precisely as it came from the pen of its writer.

SERMON.

PHILIPPIANS 2: 8—11.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In this chapter the apostle recommends humility, love and benevolence to Christians from the example of the author of our religion. In the verses read in connection with the two preceding, St. Paul brings into view the humility and obedience of Christ even unto the death of the cross, his subsequent exaltation in heaven, and the dominion given him over that moral world for whose benefit he made a sacrifice of himself.

In the consideration of the text, I shall endeavor to direct your minds, my Christian hearers, to that view of the scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ, the one Mediator, which may induce you gratefully to receive him as the Messiah, and excite your diligence in acquiring the qualifica-

tions of the Christian character, as a necessary preparation for the happiness of heaven.

Your serious attention is requested while I consider the following propositions:

I. In the salvation of men, Jesus Christ acts as the minister of God.

II. God has commissioned his son Jesus Christ to dispense a pardon to repenting sinners, and to raise the virtuous and good of the human race of all ages and nations to a life of immortal happiness.

III. Our obligation of obedience to Jesus Christ is absolute.

IV. The example of Jesus Christ in respect both to obedience and reward, furnishes great encouragement and support to us.

I. In the salvation of men, Jesus Christ acts as the minister of God.

It is the good pleasure of God to accomplish the purposes of his wisdom and mercy, by the instrumentality of subordinate agents. In the natural kingdom general principles are established, and the world is governed by the uniform operation of fixed laws. Hereby we become acquainted with the general administrations of God in the government of the material world, and learn the manner in which we may apply natural principles to our benefit. By the pages of the book of nature as they are opened to our view, our knowledge of God is enlarged and they become a medium of our communion with Him.

In the moral government of God, He executes his purposes, and bestows His blessings through the mediation of

subordinate agents. Christ Jesus is the minister of grace and mercy to the children of men. But goodness and mercy in God are not the *effect* but the *cause* of the mediation and ministry of Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The language of the New Testament on this subject is clear and full. The inspired writers uniformly declare, that in the whole business of our salvation, Christ acted under a commission from God. Jesus Christ himself informs us, that he was sent into our world by his Father, that the doctrines which he taught, were not his, but the doctrines of Him who sent him, and that the works which he wrought were performed by derived power. "Of myself," said he, "I can do nothing." He as explicitly tells us, that when the purposes of his mission on earth shall have been accomplished, he shall return to his Father, and in heaven complete the divine scheme of grace and mercy, and then resign his commission of power and dominion into the hands of his Father, that God may be all and in all. We should therefore consider Christ the *subordinate*, and God as the *original* author of our salvation.

Why God adopted the Christian plan of grace and mercy in preference to any other, I presume not to say. Why Jesus the son of God according to the divine counsel should for sinners die on the cross, I attempt not to assign the reasons. What bearing, if any, the administrations of heaven with men may have on other intelligent creatures of the common Parent of the universe, I know not. We, being the dependants and offending subjects of the Almighty Sovereign, it becomes us with gratitude to receive the gifts of

love and mercy in the manner in which God is pleased to bestow them, and not enter on reasonings with our Maker, because they were granted in one particular way. We may however rest on the pursuasion, that the ways of God are wise and good; that they are the wisest and the best.

When on earth, Christ taught the world every essential religious truth, instructed men in every moral duty, and in his life gave an exemplification of the virtues that he inculcated. We are now brought to the second branch of our subject.

II. God has commissioned his son Jesus Christ to dispense a pardon to the repenting sinner, and to raise the virtuous and good of all nations and ages to a life of immortal happiness.

The act of making atonement, or putting away sin is in the Scriptures sometimes ascribed to God himself, and sometimes attributed to persons acting under authority from Him. Where the sacred writers inform us that God putteth away sin, they mean that God by his own power removes the penalty of a broken law, and cancels the guilt of an offender. When a subordinate agent is said to have made atonement for, or to have put away sin, a different sense is conveyed. No subordinate agent possesses underived power to pardon the sins of men. In all such instances the meaning is, that the agency of the subordinate is the means appointed by God for the pardon of the contrite, or the way by which God is pleased to dispense His mercy. The obedience of Christ unto death is the established method by which the love and mercy of God to sinners are communicated. As the reward of his obedience Jesus has entered into heaven as the High Priest of

our profession, and as Mediator he is commissioned to remove the impediments that lay in the way of our salvation, to annul the penalty of a broken law, to cancel the offences of his disciples, and to bestow on them the crown of immortality. It pleased the Father of all mercies to grant the highest blessings to a sinful world through the mediation of Jesus Christ. The mediation and ministry of Christ are by the will of God made the foundation of the system, in the execution of which the contrite sinner will receive a pardon of his offences, and the good man obtain justification and life. But to prevent wrong apprehensions, we should bear in mind, that there is no natural connection between the death of one person, and the pardon of the sins of another. It is the appointment of God, that men should obtain salvation by the ministry of Jesus on the *condition* of faith and repentance. We may not therefore depend on the merits of Christ for divine acceptance while we neglect to comply with the appointed terms of salvation. The promise is made only to those, who 'purge their consciences from dead works to serve the living and true God;' only to those, who under their Christian advantages 'overcome the corruptions that are in the world through lusts,' and are made 'partakers of a divine nature.' I pass to our third position.

III. Our obligation of obedience to Jesus Christ is absolute.

The apostle informs us, that in consequence of Christ's obedience unto death, God has highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that every knee should bow, and every tongue confess him to be Lord to the glory of God. Christ has established his kingdom

on earth by the appointment of God, and we owe him allegiance. As far as the knowledge of Christianity extends, men are bound to receive Jesus as the authorized Saviour. Where the conditions of acceptance are published, the obligations of men to comply with them cannot be canceled. It is not at our election, whether we shall become subjects of the moral government of God; from circumstances under which we are placed, we are subjects, and obedience to the laws of our religion is absolutely required as the condition of divine favor and future happiness. It is not left at our option to receive, or reject Jesus as Mediator and Lord. He is exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, and we are placed under his dominion. The laws of Christianity receive not their force from our voluntary adoption of them. Our voluntary submission to Christ, our sincere observance of his directions is essential if we would secure the reward, promised to the Christian in a future world; but our consent is not necessary to render the precepts of the Gospel binding. He who does not take upon himself the name of a Christian, is not less bound by its rules, than he who does. We cannot, were we disposed, separate ourselves from the government of Christ. The laws of the Gospel certainly have a binding force on us. The disobedient Christian who has not confessed Christ before men, will finally be condemned, as well as the disobedient professor. Let us then,

IV. Set before us the example of obedience and reward, illustrated in the character of Jesus, that our minds may be supported under the conflicts of Christian virtue, and be animated to run with diligence and alacrity the Christian race.

The worth of religious truth, the importance of moral duty cannot be more impressively displayed, than by the humiliation and obedience, by the suffering and death of Christ. If the beloved Son of God came into our world to suffer and die, that he might remove the evils attendant on sin, how deformed, how pernicious is this enemy of man! If this Divine personage appeared among men to give an exemplification of the whole assemblage of moral virtues, of what estimation are these in the sight of heaven? How great is their importance to every subject of the moral government of God.

The life of Jesus Christ composes an essential part of the history of the Gospel, and it is placed before all men, to whom the Gospel is published. His example, therefore, will furnish the noblest model, and give the best instruction to all, who shall hear the glad tidings of peace and reconciliation.

The goodness and mercy of God are dispensed to us by Jesus Christ in a manner best calculated to establish and increase our piety and virtue; and thereby to qualify us for the rewards of heaven.

Jesus, as an example of the rewards promised to obedience, may confirm our confidence in his promises, and enliven our hopes of future happiness. His life is fitted to animate us to constancy in our Christian profession, inspire us with zeal in the performance of all religious duties, and raise us to fervor in every devotional office.

Jesus Christ is constituted mediator between God and man, and appointed to be the minister of the highest blessings to all nations of the earth. Great was the reward conferred on him for the faithful execution of this honorable

and benevolent commission. He was obedient unto death, and in consequence, God exalted him to be a prince and a Saviour. This fact stated on the authority of the New Testament, removes, I conceive, the strongest objection that was ever brought against the scheme of mediation, viz: the just suffers for the unjust. If Christ Jesus in the issue of the divine administration be a sufferer on account of his benevolent agency, the objection would have weight; but if in view of the joy set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame; if in the moment of the greatest indignity and torture which Jews and Romans inflicted upon him, he could in the language of confidence and triumph say, My judgment is with the Lord, and my reward is with my God; if in consequence of his suffering even unto the death of the cross, God has highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, and that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father, then all the sufferings of Jesus Christ may be reconciled with the perfections of God, and rendered consistent with his government over moral, accountable beings.

In this view, the example of Jesus as has already been observed, may be doubly useful to us. It may strengthen our fortitude, and animate our diligence in the performance of the sacred duties of our probation.—If our Divine Master was made perfect through suffering, we his disciples may be. His reception of a glorious reward gives us the assurance of hope, that our labor will not be in vain. If we become the sincere followers of the Saviour, and

by a patient continuance in the ways of well-doing seek for glory, honor and immortality, we shall, as our reward, be crowned with eternal life.

In conclusion ;

We, my Christian brethren, possessing all the privileges of the most favored disciples of our ascended Redeemer, our Judge will require of us high improvements in religious knowledge, and great advances in Christian life. Where much is given, there much will be required. Let us then adopt Christianity in its purity and simplicity. Let us imbue our minds with its spirit, and resign our lives to its influence. May not our gratitude to God for the benefits of the Christian institution consist only in verbal acknowledgments of obligation, but in grateful feelings to the giver of every good and perfect gift, and in honor to him, who gave himself a ransom for us, may we walk worthily of the benefits we have received, and the rewards we have in prospect. Let us duly estimate the honor of our relation to Jesus, the mediator of infinite blessings to mankind. Be it our endeavor to make the Gospel subservient to its high purposes. May its instructions and motives persuade us to cease from doing evil, and inspire us with zeal in doing well. May we make Divinity not only a speculative study, but also a practical principle.

Let us do the will of God published to us by his Son, Jesus Christ. Let us transplant into our hearts the true principles of the Gospel, and in our lives embody the virtues it recommends, and which were in their purity and power manifested in the temper and life of their Divine Author. May the fortitude and constancy, the piety and meekness, the benevolence and charity, which shone in the

example of Jesus, adorn our characters. In all respects may we imitate the pattern he set before us.

In this manner may we express a sense of our obligations for the mediation and ministry of Jesus Christ, and discover our gratitude for his benevolent services. And in this way may we prepare ourselves for the future rewards promised to his obedient disciples.

LESSONS FROM NATURE:

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED TO THE

SECOND CHURCH IN WORCESTER,

May 25th, 1828,

BY THE

REV. AARON BANCROFT, D. D.

SERMON.

Acts 14: 17. *Nevertheless, He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.*

The apostle in this passage directs our reflections to the proof of the being and providence of God, which arises from the material system, and from the revolution of the seasons. This proof is presented to all men, and all reflecting minds may perceive, and in some degree comprehend it. Though it has not secured the world from weak and debasing idolatry, it has been sufficient to establish a general belief that the interests of man are under the inspection and control of a superintending Divinity. Cicero, the distinguished philosopher of Rome, remarks, "Here on this earth, on which we dwell, the sky does not cease to be genial, nor the trees in their proper season to shoot forth branches, nor the vines to bud and bring their fruit to perfection, nor the boughs to hang down with ripe berries, nor the corn to yield its expected increase; but all things flourish, the springs are continually running, and the fields are clothed with grass. Then if we consider what a multitude there is of cattle, partly for food, partly for carrying, and partly for clothing

our bodies; and the nature of man, who seems to be formed for contemplating the heaven and the Gods, and to adore and worship them; and that the whole earth and sea lie open for his use: when we see and consider these, and innumerable other things, can we doubt whether there is a superior being, who is either the creator of these things, if indeed they were created, or, if they always were, who is the disposer and manager of so great a work and charge?" Another ancient sage (Plotinus) observes: "If we hearken to the voice of the world, we shall hear it say nothing but 'God hath made me.' As a friend in sending us frequent presents, expresses his remembrance of us and affection for us, though he neither speaks nor writes; so the gifts of the divine bounty which are scattered abroad on every side, are so many witnesses sent to attest the divine care and goodness; and they speak it in very sensible language to the heart, though not to the ear."

We Christians enjoy higher means to form worthy apprehensions of the character and government of Deity, than the wisest heathen philosopher possessed. It must then be our duty devoutly to note the regular operation of the established laws of the natural, as well as the moral kingdom, with which we are connected. To speak of the course of nature separate from the will and agency of God, is to use words that have no meaning. An examination of the works of nature will bring us acquainted with their Author, teach us our dependence, and inspire us with gratitude for the various and rich entertainments of divine Providence.

God formed the earth and meted out the heavens. He appointed the sun his place, and set the sea its bounds. He presides over the system which He planned and made;

and by His will its grand principles have their uniform operations.

The present season bears witness that God is mindful of us. The winter is passed. The earth has thrown aside her sombre garb, and assumed a more pleasing livery. The face of nature rejoices at the return of spring, and the principle of life and vegetation is everywhere restored. The trees put forth their foliage. The flowers appear in the fields, and every thing around us teems with animation. The feathered tribes, which had taken shelter from the storms of winter, or had followed the sun to a southern clime, again appear, and are busily employed to accomplish the purposes of their existence. With pleasure we look on their variegated plumage, and we listen with delight to their diversified music. They seem grateful for the returning blessings of the season, and appear highly to enjoy them.

While joy and gratitude pervade every class of beings below us, shall man, the noblest work of God on earth, be ungrateful when enjoying the richest blessings of Providence? Man knows the hand which bestows the favor. Shall the rational offspring of the common parent of the universe, who was formed in the divine image, made capable of an imitation of the benevolence of his heavenly Father, and whose prospects and hopes are raised to an endless life in the more immediate presence of God,—shall he be not mindful of the Being who supports his existence, and is the author and giver of every thing which he enjoys? Possessing the highest blessings, shall he disgrace himself by insensibility and ingratitude? Shall he debase himself by cruelty to animated beings, which the Creator of all has

placed under his protection and care? No. Impressed with a sense of the supremacy and goodness of the one living and true God, let us adopt the language of animate and inanimate nature, and praise the Lord of heaven and earth; and may we prove the sincerity of our expressions of gratitude for mercies received, by being merciful in our measure as God is merciful. Let a man in the pursuit of business, knowledge, or entertainment, when the spring season is fairly opened, commence a journey from a southern region, and direct his course to the northern division of our common country, and through successive days, and for hundreds of miles, he may feast on the richest beauties the earth ever displays. He will see fields of grain and grass verdant, and in the deepest tints of green; the heights either loaded with stately forests in all the freshness of renewed foliage, or laying in rich pastures, on which flocks and herds are luxuriantly feeding, or in frolics expressing their joy for the renovating influences of a vernal sun. He will everywhere hear the hum of busy life, and he may attend to the fowls of heaven, singing their carol, or industriously engaged in preparations for a new progeny. He will travel amidst flowers and blossoms, and find the air impregnated with their fragrance. Can this man, blessed with health, protected from the casualties incident to his situation, and feeling a gratification from the scenes through which he is passing, can he reflect on the wonderful adaptation of all material things, to the purposes of animated beings, and his mind not rise to devout admiration of the power, wisdom and goodness hereby manifested? Can he contemplate the means by which all creatures are supported, and not adore the Being, who at first formed by His word

the fabric of our earth, and by whose will revolving seasons are fraught with blessings for all creatures? Can he meditate on the exact manner in which the organs of man are suited to the objects around him, on his own capacity to apply natural principles to the essential purposes of his existence, and on the various enjoyments which are placed within his acquisition, and not feel his heart swell with gratitude to God, in whom he lives, moves, and has his being, and who is the giver of every good and perfect gift? We are all, Christian brethren, witnesses of these divine displays, and we all partake of the bounty which flows for the support and comfort of the family of mankind; let us all then join in ascriptions of thanks and praise to our Father in heaven who preserves our lives, succeeds the labors of our hands and fills our heart with food and gladness.

The earth has again been prepared for the labor of man. Let not the husbandman deem the cultivation of the farm to be an ignoble employment. It is the business originally assigned to man. The business that composed his pleasure as well as labor, when every passion was pure, and every wish innocent. It is the business which has engaged the attention and employed the time of men, whose memory will be venerated while the history of human greatness and virtue is extant. The culture of the soil has a direct tendency to promote serenity of mind, purity of manners and sobriety of life and conversation; and of all the laborious conditions in society, the husbandman finds the most to soothe his toils and to entertain and improve his mind. A sober and independent yeomanry compose the strength and sinew of every country. The manufacturers and mechanics are of absolute

necessity in populous society; nicer artizans furnish the luxuries and refinements of life, but its necessaries must be drawn from the bosom of our parent earth. The merchant transports the conveniences and elegances of one country to another, he distributes the various blessings of Providence; and by opening a free intercourse among nations, he does much to remove local prejudices, to make man mild and sociable to man. But in a country like ours, whose extended plains and lofty forests invite the cultivating hand of man, whose laborers bear but a small proportion to the extent of land to be cultivated, the agricultural interest must be considered of the highest importance.

The husbandman goeth forth to his daily business, and it conduces to his health and strength. He partakes of a frugal meal, and it nourishes him. His sleep is sound, and it renews his vigor, and with the sun he begins the labors of the day. The husbandman enjoys the best opportunity to inquire into the operations of nature, and to acquaint himself with the works of God. He may watch the mysteries of vegetation, and witness the growth of the seed to its maturity in the ear. The result will not be simply the gratification of an inquiring mind, but hereby he will become acquainted with the manner in which the general laws of nature operate, and he will know how to direct them to promote his best interests.

For success in his business, the husbandman depends not on the smiles of the powerful, the bounty of the rich, or the assistance of the multitude; he depends only on the blessing of God, who has promised that seed-time and harvest shall never fail; and when the tiller of the ground beholds the variegated colors of the rainbow, he may feel renewed

confidence in the divine promise. Industrious in his employment, success in it is the care of Heaven. Though he rest from labor through fatigue, yet nature is still untired; and while he sleeps, the process of vegetation is continued, till his crops gain their ripeness. The summer's breeze, the gentle shower, the distilled dew, are all fraught by the agency of the Parent of goodness with a blessing for the industrious husbandman. Can he, then, who tills the ground be impious and undevout? Shall he who participates in the richest blessings of the seasons refuse to acknowledge the superintendence of Him, who is the author of life, and who endowed material things with their various properties? Can man carry his researches into the power of matter, trace the operations of natural laws, and receive the reward of his industry in the bounties of the earth, and still be unmindful of the First Cause of all things, unmindful of his God, who preserves the system of the universe in its regular course, graciously remembers him, who by the sweat of his face eats bread, and continues the connection between his labors and the abundance of his harvests? The husbandman perceives his daily dependence on divine Providence, and if he seriously reflects, is made sensible of the blessings which the God of nature bestows.

Happy the husbandman who under due impression of the superintendence of heaven, enters on the appropriate business of the spring season, and diligently prosecutes the culture of the soil. Vernal influences will cause his seed to swell and germinate, the warmth of summer will bring it to maturity, and autumn will pour her bounty into his lap. The ripened grain will call for the reaper's sickle, the fruit trees will unload their heavy branches into his store, and

the granary will contain a sufficiency for all the demands of the months of winter. From the fruits of his labor, he will have enough to supply the wants of his dependants, and to satisfy the claims of justice. Grateful to the God of the harvest, he can distribute his bread to the hungry.

Not so the man, who in the season of vigor and animation gives himself up to idleness and sloth, and during the months of summer, in sluggishness folds his arms. For him, autumn has no bounty. Winter finds him unprepared for its privations, and with meanness of spirit he must droop his head, and beg of his industrious neighbors the crumbs of their tables, even a morsel of bread for his distressed family. Such are the wages of idleness. This is the end to which sloth leads.

Nor is it more certain as it respects the year, that he who will not sow in seed time shall not reap a harvest, than it is in reference to human life. Youth is the season in which those acquisitions must be made, that will render old age honorable, useful, and quiet. Youth is the season in which the seeds of those moral habits must be sown, that will not only yield pleasant products on earth, but also ripen into the incorruptible fruit of heaven. A youth of idleness, folly and vice, yields an age of remorse, poverty and shame. A life of uselessness and profligacy here, will end in sorrow and misery hereafter. May all who now possess the animation of youth and health, be persuaded to pursue the path of sobriety and virtue. God has promised the industrious tiller of the ground that seed time and harvest shall not fail. He has also promised a blessing to those who remember him in the days of their youth. Let not, my young friends, your favorable season of life

pass without beginning the important business of your creation. Thus early enter into the path of piety and virtue; it will lead you to the goal of peace, joy, and happiness. Improve well the morning of life, and your setting sun will be serene; and the grave will be an introduction to a state of being where your intellectual and moral powers will continually grow in vigor, where the lustre of virtue will become more and more bright, and where you will enjoy ever increasing happiness.

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§ 3. Rev. Alonzo Hill.

More than forty years, Dr. Bancroft was the sole pastor of the Second Church. Though not possessed of great physical vigor, he was assiduous and persevering in his vocation, and rarely failed to perform his accustomed duties.* When he had passed the age of "three-score and ten" years, it was proposed to lessen his cares by the settlement of an associate pastor. The most of those with whom he began the enterprise of sustaining a new religious society in Worcester, had passed away; he could not ex-

* "My own constitution was never robust, yet through the smiles of Heaven, I have been enabled to perform my public duty with as little interruption as is common to man. The average number of Sabbaths on which I was by indisposition prevented from appearing in the pulpit, would not exceed one in nine years.

"During the whole period of my ministry, I have not taken a single Sunday to visit distant relatives, or make journeys for health or amusement. For several successive years, I was obliged to make journeys on my own business; but I procured preachers at my own expense to the satisfaction of the parish."—*Semi-Centennial Discourse, pp.* 30, 31.

pect to remain many years longer. The society having increased in numbers and wealth,* were able to bear without inconvenience the augmentation of expense involved in the proposed change, and accordingly, on the 1st of January, 1827, the Rev. Alonzo Hill was invited to become colleague with Dr. Bancroft. Accepting the invitation, Mr. Hill was ordained the 28th of the following March.

Introductory Prayer, by the Rev. Alexander Young of Boston; Prayer, by Rev. Thaddeus M. Harris, D. D. of Dorchester; Sermon, by Rev. John Brazer of Salem; Ordaining Prayer, by Rev. Dr. Kirkland, Pres. of Harvard University; Charge, by Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D. D.; Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. George Ripley of Boston; Address to the People, by Rev. Dr. Thayer of Lancaster; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Isaac Allen of Bolton.

Mr. Hill is a native of Harvard, in Worcester County. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1822. For a year or two he was assistant teacher in Leicester Academy. In 1824, he entered the Theological Institution at Cambridge. Having completed the studies preparatory to his professional life, he became the junior pastor of the Second Church in Worcester. At the commencement of his ministry here, he was not only greeted with the affectionate re-

* "The society has become respectable in numbers, and of sufficient wealth conveniently to bear a great augmentation of expense. The firmness and constancy of its members have been proved by a sure test; few at any period have separated from the society; and the descendants of its founders, who now reside in this town, generally belong to the parish. The society has never been disturbed by divisions; the harmony and peace which have here reigned, now exist; and its present members, I trust, hold their opinions as the result of diligent inquiry, and are fixed in their course by religious principle."—*Dr. B's Sermon*, 1827, *p.* 17.

gards of his people, but also cordially welcomed by his predecessor and colleague. "I bid my young brother a cordial welcome to a part in the ministry of reconciliation. May a divine benediction rest on you in the office which you now fill. May you possess the spirit of your Master, and like Him may you find delight in doing the will of His and your Father, who is in Heaven." The senior, who thus addressed his junior associate, labored and advised with him for twelve years, and then was gathered to his fathers. The relation between the two was one of mutual pleasure;* and their union acted favorably on the interests of the people for whom they both labored. Soon after Mr. Hill's settlement, it was deemed expedient to erect a more spacious and convenient house of worship.† It was dedicated Aug. 20, 1829; sermon by the senior pastor.

Mr. Hill has labored here almost a quarter of a century. Since the decease of Dr. Bancroft, he has been sole pastor of the church, and discharged his duties to the general ac-

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* "His communications with me have ever been affectionate and respectful; and our intercourse is harmonious and pleasant."—*Semi-Centennial Discourse, p.* 26.

† "The new brick Meeting-House on Main street was erected at an expense, including the site, of $17,000. The foundation was laid August 11, 1828, when an address was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Hill, and religious services performed by the Rev. Dr. Bancroft. The building was 75 feet from east to west, and 68 feet from north to south; the walls 31 feet high, and the tower, surmounted by a cupola, 125 feet in height. The floor was divided into 104 pews."—*Lin. Hist., p.* 347.

This house was consumed by fire in 1849. Another has been erected on the same site, far exceeding the one which it replaces, not only in its dimensions, but in its plan of architecture and elegant finish. It is one of the finest structures in the State and an ornament to the city. Its cost was about $25,000. The Rev. Mr. Hill preached the sermon at its dedication, March 26, 1851, from HAGGAI 2: 9. *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts.*

ceptance of his people. His services in behalf of the public schools and of the general interests of the city have been highly appreciated, and won for him in return respectful consideration. In the maturity of his strength, and sustained by the confidence of an attached and appreciating people, years of pleasant and useful labor are still before him. Though ministering to a large and intelligent congregation, he has yet found time to prepare several works for the press. One of the latest of these is a "Discourse delivered in the ancient meeting house of the First Congregational Society in Hingham, Sept. 8, 1850." Some extracts from this discourse are hereto appended as illustrations of its author's mode of thought and style of utterance.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

REV. MR. HILL'S DISCOURSE.

"When I received an invitation from your committee to preach here, I was told that I should preach in the oldest church in the United States,—the only surviving relic of the earlier Puritan times, where for many generations the ancestors of honored and beloved parishioners of my own had worshiped. This seemed to me inducement enough to make even a longer pilgrimage, and to be here. It seemed to me something to be permitted to worship with you in an edifice which had survived the casualties and

changes of a hundred and sixty-eight years;—an edifice which dates back to the days of Charles II., and in which strength was obtained to resist his infringement of New England's charter;—an edifice whose beams were laid in New England's darkest days by men who were fresh from the desolating wars of Philip, aided by women whose sons had been butchered at their own doors by Indian tomahawks. It is something to stand in the pulpit under which men who had shared in the perils of the winter's passage of the "Mayflower" may have sat and worshiped; where Eliot may have stood in his old age, and bent himself in prayer; and where Gay, for nearly seventy years, with strength unabated, and eye undimmed, ministered. Associations of this kind must be familiar to you, and must endear this venerable church as no modern edifice, however beautiful and adorned with art, can be endeared. To you, this antique structure must be all written over with the memories of the past; this pulpit, these walls and pews, must bear to your hearts the history of the men and women who are gone,—the venerated and loved, whose names are recorded in your village annals and on the tombstones of your grave-yards. But associations like these belong to yourselves, and with them the stranger cannot intermeddle. There are, however, those connected with this venerable relic which belong to us all. They are such as are dear to the heart of New England and Christian men. Let us pause while we gather them up, and contemplate them together.

"Before I begin, there is one thought to which I wish to give utterance. We cannot fail to observe a peculiarity in the genius of Christianity which distinguishes it from all

other religions ; and that is its entire independence of time and place and circumstances. Paganism had no being but in the sacred enclosures and consecrated groves where its rites were performed. Judaism could exist only in Judea, and under the shadow of the gorgeous temple. When that temple was demolished, when the altar of sacrifice was overturned, and the long array of Priests and Levites, with their emblematic robes and imposing ceremonies had ceased, then Judaism was dead. It could no more flourish without this central object to which all eyes could be turned,—it could no more exist in foreign lands, away from the hills and streams of Zion, than the earth could exist in greenness and beauty without a central sun. But Christianity, a spiritual religion, drawing its life from Christ, who is its invisible Head, addressing the intellect and affections, and acting through the medium of great religious thoughts, regarding each individual as a temple and each heart as an altar of incense, is not constrained to time and place. It teaches that neither on Mount Gerizim nor in Jerusalem is the only place where men ought to worship. Familiar in all ages, a denizen of all countries, it is at home alike in the frozen and the burning zone, in the mountain and plain, and islands of the sea. It may flourish and be a living and life-giving influence in the crowded city and in the solitude of the country ; and worship, as spiritual, as enkindling, and as acceptable, may be rendered in the plain meeting-house as in the proud cathedral, in the hall which no formal prayers have consecrated, in the upper chamber appropriated to other uses, in the grove arched by the branches of the spreading trees, as in the church dedicated by the hands of venerable ministers and devoted

through successive generations to worship alone. It is not the place which sanctifies the service, but the service which sanctifies the place.

"And yet, my brethren, it cannot be denied that there are feelings and associations, which come in aid of the religious sentiment, found only in temples set apart for religious worship,—those time-hallowed edifices through whose windows a dim religious light comes in, along whose roof the notes of ancient psalmody have long echoed, and whose pavements have been worn by the footsteps and whose walls have been made holy by the prayers of successive generations. It is an influence which all devout minds confess, and which should not be readily relinquished. We cannot resist that influence if we would; we ought not if we could. These heavens could not enkindle the reverence they do, if they were not old. Men have loved to worship by the ocean, and have built their oratories in ancient woods; for they helped to awaken a religious emotion. Travelers tell us of the veneration inspired by the ancient churches of Europe, reared so many centuries ago, and covered with the ivy and moss of ages. They seem to lift up the worshiper into a higher region of observation, to rebuke his frivolity and worldliness, and awaken thoughts of God and eternity. They do not well, therefore, who hasten to erase every association with the past; who build for their churches, frail, gairish structures, that scarcely outlive their builders. They disregard and set at naught a great instrument of devotion. To this cause is to be attributed not a little of the irreverence of the New England element, as contrasted with the character of almost any other people on the face of the globe. You

have done well reverently to preserve, repair and prop your old venerated meeting-house. Let it stand a thousand years; for it must speak as no modern edifice can speak to the hearts of a people. It has its story of by-gone days, and communes with you of the invisible and distant. Images arise before you which cannot be seen in our recent structures; and impressions you must receive here, which, if you cherish them as you ought, will sanctify and bless. Your fathers worshiped in this mountain, and it should be holy unto the Lord in the heart of their children."

"There is another thought to be added. The long continuance of your society, and the unchanging character of your place of worship, by their contrast strikingly illustrate our own frailty and mutability. The edifice stands, the tower on the sea-beaten coast, while the generations of men, like the waves, come and go. Travelers say that nothing teaches their own mortality like those solemn structures, built ages ago, that stand in lonely grandeur in the midst of comparatively modern-built cities. Eloquent in their silence, they seem to address them in almost human language. From their antique towers there comes a voice; and it seems to say, 'You are of yesterday, while we belong to the ages. When as yet you were not, when as yet nothing in the wide world knew you, we were here as we now are; and we shall be here when you, the generations of men, fathers, mothers and their children, shall have passed away.' Our frailty, my Christian friends, — how can we resist the conviction of it, forced as it is by the objects and scenes around us? The tree that we plant by our dwelling shall be green when we are gone. The house that shelters, the garments that cover, shall survive us.

The very leaf on which our name is written, which the winds may waft away, and the passing shower destroy, shall be read when the hand that wrote it shall moulder, and the places that knew us shall know us no more. And how can you enter a place like this from week to week, and ever forget the lesson of your mortality? A thousand voices seem to be here to remind you, that this is not your home. The six generations that have worshiped here seem to speak from this ancient desk and these time-stained walls. Images of those who once entered these doors, and sat one after another in the same pews,—aged and venerable men and women, young men and maidens and children and blooming youth,—throng these courts. They came here as you have come to-day: they went out as you will go, and returned no more.

'They have lain down
With patriarchs of the infant-world; with kings,
The powerful of the earth; the wise, the good;
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,—
All in one mighty sepulchre!'

May we not add?—

'The sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
And the sweet babe and the gray-headed man,
Shall one by one be gathered to their side,
By those who in their turn shall follow them.'

"It is true—we see it all around us, we see it as we stand in this time-hallowed temple—we follow, we go to swell the vast congregation of the dead. We shall be gathered to the side of those who are already gone. We vanish like the dreams of the night; we disappear like the dews of

the morning. Our life, it is a vapor. It gathers, it glitters in the sunlight, and then passes away. And is that all? Is there nothing which we can call our own? Is there nothing over which the years and the ages roll in vain? Is there nothing which the irresistible stream of time does not bear away? Yes, there is something: the true life is such a thing. Every good deed, every good word, every good thought, abideth amid the multitudinous change. It enters into and becomes a part of the indestructible and permanent. It is caught up by the passing generation; it is transmitted from mouth to mouth, from heart to heart, and so abideth forever. Yes, character is such a thing. The wisdom that comes to the seeking mind; the affection that glows in the devoted heart; the peace, passing understanding, that is found in the faithful bosom,—they are everlasting. Yes, faith and goodness are such a thing; for whosoever liveth and believeth shall never die, and whosoever doeth the will of God shall abide for ever.

"What, then, remains for us but to remember what we are, and for what we are destined,—so frail in our mortal lives, so imperishable in the life of the affections? We are here to-day, and tomorrow we die. And would we die utterly? Would we leave the world, and leave no monument and memorial of our existence, and carry with us no consciousness that we have made the world better and happier than we found it? We meet like two freighted trains on the track, glance at each other an instant, and then rush on. We come to the solemn gathering; we hear familiar names, we gaze on familiar faces: we come again, and one and another are not here. How tenderly should creatures so

related feel toward each other; how slow to be angered, and to vex each other, and neglect the common good; how swift to hear and go forth and toil for the common benefit! Ah! think how soon, we know not, all will be over. The day of grace will have gone, and the opportunity to serve God and man will have ended. The ears into which we might breathe one word more of kindness will have closed, the heart in which we might awaken one more thrill of gratification will have ceased its beating, and the countenance on which we might spread one more expression of pleasure will be composed and still in the grave. We look upon those whom we may bless,—they are gone while we gaze; we listen to catch the familiar accents, and hear only the melancholy wind that sighs over them. They go, for it is God's will; but, thanks be to Him who giveth us the victory, we can contemplate these moral changes undismayed. Through faith and affection, unmoved, we can see the generations of men go: standing upon a rock, we can calmly look down upon the heaving and changeful billows; and may trustfully look up, though the heavens being on fire shall melt, though the earth be shaken as with an earthquake, and the pillars of the universe fall. In patience, then, let us wait the change, and welcome its coming; for that which is purest and best here will go with us into other domains of God, and be the pledge of our acceptance and the crown of our rejoicing."

CHAPTER IV.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY.

§ 1. *The Church formed.*

Not until 1812 was regular worship instituted in Worcester by Baptists. In 1795, James Wilson, Esq.,* from Newcastle upon Tyne, England, joined the only three† individuals who were known, previously to that period, to entertain the sentiments peculiar to that denomination. He removed from England to this country, "that he might more fully enjoy the blessing of civil and religious freedom."‡ For the period of seventeen years, he had meetings occasionally for religious worship in his dwelling-house. Those of his own denomination whom he found here, having been removed by death, he was for a time the solitary advocate and supporter of the distinctive views of Baptists. But, though alone, he was not discouraged. True to his convictions of truth and duty, he persevered in his efforts to realize the object of his hope, and, in 1812, had the gratification of witnessing the establishment of regular worship, the formation of a Baptist church, and the settlement of its

* Mr. Wilson, Postmaster of Worcester from 1801 to 1833, was the first deacon of the Baptist church here. Though for a time excluded from the fellowship of the church under its first pastor, he was subsequently restored, and removed to Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1833.

† Dr. John Green, Mr. Amos Putnam, and Mrs. Dolly Flagg.

‡ Records of the Baptist Church, p. 1.

first pastor. The increase of population added to the number of those who sympathized with Mr. Wilson; some discourses of Dr. Austin, on national and state fasts, occasioned the withdrawal of individuals from the first parish, and these naturally enough united with those who contemplated separate worship; and in July, 1812, the hall in the schoolhouse of the Centre District, was opened for the accommodation of this new voluntary association. On the 9th of December following, "the Baptist Church in Worcester" was constituted. The "church articles"* were the same with those adopted by the First Baptist Church in Portland. The council convened to assist in the organization of this church, was composed of representatives from the churches in Leicester, Charlton, Grafton, Sutton and the First Church in Providence. Elder Stephen Gano of Providence preached on the occasion and presented the right hand of fellowship. At the same time and by the same council, the first pastor of the church was installed: sermon by the Rev. Joseph Cornell. The church was composed of twenty-eight members, fourteen males and fourteen females. It was intended to have the public services of the organization of the church and installation of the pastor in the meeting-house of the South Church. Application had been made to the selectmen of the town and the assessors of the first parish for this purpose, and their assent had been obtained. Drs. Austin and Bancroft had been invited to dine with the council; the latter accepted the invitation, but the former declined. The evening before the day designated for the meeting of the council, he addressed a letter to Mr. Wilson, declaring that he "would gratefully ac-

* Appendix H.

knowledge the invitation as a testimony of Christian affection and confidence, if facts did not forbid him to do so;" that "to treat those who appear to be the real people of God with tenderness and fraternal respect, he esteems to be among the first of his duties;" but that for several important reasons, which he specifies, he cannot accept the invitation tendered to him by the Baptists, and "once for all expresses his intention to act in regard to them merely on the defensive, and, as he is determined not officiously to interrupt, so he wishes not to be interrupted in the prosecution of a work, which has been consigned to him, as he hopes, by the Redeemer of Zion."* On the receipt of this communication, a change of place became necessary, leave to occupy the meeting-house of the Second Society was asked and granted, and there the public services were performed.

In 1813, the church erected a house of worship on a slight eminence, east of the common. The building was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God, Dec. 23, of that year. Elder William Bentley, the pastor, preached on the occasion. His text was, HAGGAI 2 : 9. *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.*" This house was destroyed by fire, May 21, 1836. Another was erected on the same site within the year.†

The church and society increased from year to year, until it was thought expedient to 'colonize.' The Pleasant Street Baptist Church was then formed, an account of

* Records of Bap. Chh. p. 30.

† It is 79 feet in length, and 50 feet wide, with a spire 138 feet high. It has recently been renovated, and furnished with a good organ.

which will be found in another chapter. The parent society is still flourishing; and the contrast between its 'day of small things' and its present day of strength and prosperity, cannot but awaken gratitude in its members and encourage them to persistent effort.

§ 2. Eld. William Bentley

Was the first pastor of the Baptist church. A native of Newport, R. I., he was born, March 3, 1775. His early advantages for education were on the most limited scale.* At the age of fourteen years, he was apprenticed to a baker in Boston. The serious impressions which resulted in that change of views and feelings which turned his thoughts to the ministry, were occasioned by a discourse preached under the great elm tree on Boston Common, by the Rev. Jesse Coe, of the Methodist denomination. He was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Second Baptist Church in Boston, Nov. 3, 1806, and the next year received ordination as an evangelist, from the Warren Association in Salem. He preached the year following to the Baptist church in Malden. In 1808, he commenced labors in Tiverton, R. I., and continued to minister to the feeble church in that place, about four years. Having preached a few times in Worcester, he was thought to be well qualified to aid the infant society here in their arduous undertaking. At their

* "I have labored hard all my days for the want of an education; for I only had three quarters' schooling, and that in the evening, while I was an apprentice."—*Letter from Mr. Bentley to the Author.*

unanimous request, he came, Oct. 30, 1812, 'to take the pastoral charge of the church, when constituted.' His installation took place on the day of the organization of the church. His salary was to be $300, 'in quarterly payments,' with the privilege of four Sabbaths each year for 'visiting his friends.' Mr. Bentley labored with great zeal, and during his ministry here frequent accessions were made to the Baptist church. In the early part of 1815, difficulties arose between him and some of the prominent members of the church, and, on the 30th of June in that year, he asked a dismission from his pastoral charge. Leaving Worcester, after a few months, he went to Wethersfield, Ct., and became pastor of the Baptist church in that place. He sustained that connection six years. The church increased, under his ministry from thirty-one to one hundred and five members. During the subsequent sixteen years he was employed by the Domestic Missionary Society of Connecticut, laboring also six weeks in each year for the Massachusetts Domestic Missionary Society. While thus employed, he was instrumental in organizing four churches and erecting four houses of worship. During the next six years, he supplied the Second Baptist church in Middletown, Ct. Since 1846, he has occasionally supplied destitute churches. The only time that he received a competent support for his services was during a ministry of nearly a year in Hartford.*

In fulfilling the duties belonging to his various positions in the ministerial field, Mr. Bentley must have been in a state of almost incessant locomotion. He says, "In performing my ministerial labors, I have ridden as many

* Letter of Mr. Bentley.

miles as would go round the world three times, in my own carriage." His health has been such, that for fifteen years he did not fail of preaching a single Sabbath. He has baptized, on profession of their faith, between seven and eight hundred individuals. Still he ascribes all his success to the gracious providence of God, disclaiming all merit of his own.*

Mr. Bentley still lives at the advanced age of seventy-six years. He resides in Wethersfield, Ct. His style of preaching cannot be illustrated in this volume, for he never committed his sermons to paper. He sometimes wrote the heads of a discourse, but always trusted to the occasion for language and most of his illustrations. With scarcely any opportunity for intellectual cultivation in early life, it is not surprising that he should at times have been embarrassed in his preaching, and occasionally have used language and adopted interpretations of Scripture which a better education would have corrected.† The wonder is, however, that

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* "The Lord has seen fit to use this feeble instrument for his own glory and the salvation of souls; and if ever I am saved, it will be [by] grace, great grace—the boundless love of God in Christ Jesus."—*Letter to the Author.*

† It is said, for example, that having occasion, when in Worcester, to speak of the mission of Christ's forerunner, he declared with considerable emphasis, that King James' translators had made an important mistake, as to the designation of this important personage: '*He should not be called John the Baptist, but John the* DIPPER.'

On another occasion, he was preaching from Christ's parable of the rich man, whose grounds brought forth plentifully, and whose store-houses were not sufficiently capacious to receive his fruits. His questionings brought him to the resolution of demolishing his barns and replacing them with larger ones. The Elder quaintly remarked, that the rich man was manifestly a fool; *for a wise man, instead of tearing down the old barns,* WOULD HAVE BUILT ON AN ADDITION—an interpretation which places the folly of the transaction in quite a different connection from its place in the parable.

a man who had only the evenings of three school terms in which to complete his preparatory studies, should be able to preach at all so as to be tolerated by persons of respectable attainments in a Christian community; and it becomes still greater, when you reflect that he sustained himself for three years in Worcester, one year in Hartford, six years in Middletown, and also found his services so acceptable, that he was repeatedly sent for from considerable distances to exercise his talents as a preacher. It is by no means certain but that many of far greater attainments than his, would find it essentially conducive to their happiness, could they see, near the close of life, half as many evidences of usefulness as now greet him in retrospect and make glad the remnant of his days.

§ 3. Rev. Jonathan Going, D. D.

The church remained without a pastor only a few months. On the 3d of November, 1815, Mr. Going accepted their invitation to become Mr. Bentley's successor. His salary was to be $400 per annum, with a supply of fuel. It was afterwards raised, but never exceeded $600, and reached that sum only one year. Subsequently to 1826, it was $500. Having already been ordained as a minister of the Gospel, Mr. Going entered upon the duties of the ministry here without any public services of installation. He brought with him to this field of labor a vigorous mind, a benevolent and devoted heart, and, for sixteen years, made such 'proof of his ministry,' that he is

now remembered by all who knew him with interest and esteem.

The Rev. Jonathan Going was a native of Reading, Windsor County, Vt. He was born on the 7th of March, 1786. Having completed his preparatory studies by the aid of an uncle, the Rev. Ezra Kendall, of Kingston, Ms., he entered Brown University in 1805. During the first year of his collegiate life, he was hopefully converted to God; and, from that time forth, the great object of his life appeared to be 'doing good.' It was soon impressed upon his mind, that he ought to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry. Encouraged by his friends and by favoring providential indications, he presented himself for examination, and was licensed to preach the Gospel, by the Baptist church in Providence, before he was graduated from the University. In 1809 he completed his collegiate course, and entered upon the study of theology with the Rev. Asa Messer, D. D., then president of the College.* He was ordained in 1811, and settled in Cavendish, Vt., near his native place. Among forty-five ordained ministers in that state, he was the only one who had received a public education when ordained.† His settlement was an era among them. His learning, vivacity and devotion made him acceptable as a preacher, and gave him great influence. Though of only four or five years duration, his ministry in his native state, was followed with rich and lasting

* While studying theology he evinced strong tendencies to scepticism. "After he went to Vermont, where, as Dr. Messer once told me, the people were as naturally inclined to Calvinism as in Rhode Island they were to Arminianism, he was soon cured of that error and became a firm believer in the doctrines of the Reformation."—*Mr. Fisher's Discourse.*

† Discourse on the Life and Character of Dr. Going, by Rev. Abial Fisher.

results. He had two or three seasons of special religious influence in his own church, and was instrumental in awakening deep interest in others. A single incident will show his tact and power, as a preacher, at this early stage of his ministerial life. On a dark evening he entered an Academy in Brandon, where one of his brethren was preaching. The text was Ps. 110: 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* The speaker introduced the doctrine of election, but did not treat it either in a very striking or satisfactory manner. Dark without, it was gloomy within; the people were weary, and one of the ministers present suggested that it was expedient to close the services with prayer. At this moment, Mr. Going, who had been unobserved before, arose and asked the brother who had last spoken if he had any thing to say. The reply was in the negative, and the suggestion that it was time to close, repeated. Mr. Going asked leave to make a few remarks. By this time every eye was upon him. He took up the subject, which had been the topic of remark, analyzed it, defined its nature, showed its necessity, proved its truth, illustrated its beauty and blessedness when seen in its true relations, and then expatiated upon the wickedness of rejecting or opposing it. Having arrested, he held every one's attention, made his way through the understanding to the conscience and thence to the heart, and so converted indifference and weariness into the liveliest attention, if not perfect satisfaction.*

Mr. Going commenced his labors in Worcester, December 10th, 1815. His church, at that period, was comparatively small and feeble. It had been in existence only

* Mr. Fisher's Discourse.

three years, and had not enjoyed the best advantages either for intellectual cultivation* or the acquisition of moral strength. He saw what he had to do, and girded himself for the work with faith in the promised help of God. 'In season and out of season,' what his hand found to do, he did with his might. Opposition did not alarm, or difficulties discourage him. A friend of knowledge, he labored assiduously in promoting the cause of education.† His common school Register is a memorial of his devotion to the cause. Ardent and benevolent in his feelings, he was ready to every good word and work. Deeply as he was interested in his own church, he did not forget the prosperity of others. The cause of Sabbath Schools,‡ of Home and Foreign Missions, as well as that of common school and classical education, found in him an earnest advocate and steadfast friend.

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* It is interesting to note the change which has taken place in respect of the importance of an educated ministry, since the settlement of Elder Bentley. Then a zealous member of the church was often heard to say, 'he liked such a preacher *because* he was not a learned *(larnt)* man.' This was a decided recommendation in his view. When Dr. Staughton, President of the College in Washington, officiated here in a manner to delight the intellectual and refined, the same person, on being inquired of how he liked him, answered, 'O, pretty well for a learned *(larnt)* man.' Now, no church would be more easily satisfied with an uneducated preacher than the one under review, or express a higher sense of the importance of talent and learning in the ministry.

† "He, with others, did much to improve the schools of his own town, especially in the village. Nor did he rest till he had done what he could to improve the schools throughout the county. It was happy for him and the rising generation, that he found in this community men like-minded with himself."—*Fisher's Discourse.*

‡ "The first Sabbath School in Worcester county was organized in his church, with which not merely the young, but many in riper years became connected. Its exercises were for a season conducted by himself. These he subsequently stated he found of very essential personal benefit."—*Discourse by Rev. Edmund Turney, occasioned by the death of Dr. Going, p.* 12.

No one more earnestly than he insisted upon the importance of an educated ministry. "More education in the ministry was eternally his theme." To the establishment of the Theological Seminary in Newton he contributed in no small degree; and the efficiency of that institution bears no distant or unimportant relation to his well-timed and persevering agency. Among his brethren in the ministry in Worcester county, and in all the Baptist churches in this community, his influence was no less genial and salutary, than it was powerful. In less than five years after his settlement here, 'the Baptists that were before scattered fragments, were now, through his presiding agency, closely compacted together, and prepared for strong and vigorous action. There might not have been one in a hundred who could draw such an influence about him.'* As he begun, so he continued during the sixteen years of his ministry here.†

In 1831, he was released from his pastoral duties a few months, that he might journey to the West, for the double object of recovering his health and accomplishing a missionary work. Returning from his western tour he asked a dismission from his pastoral charge, that he might 'devote himself to the interests of Home Missions, especially in the Valley of the Mississippi.' The communication which contains this request has no little interest, even now,

* Mr. Fisher's Discourse.

† "What you know," says Mr. Swaim, "of his interest and engagedness in Ohio in every worthy and benevolent enterprise, was always true of him here, except with the additional credit that he was generally in advance of other men. What he was to the denomination in early agitating the claims of the Home Mission effort, he was to this community as a temperance man, as the warm advocate of common schools, and to the Baptists in this region, as the friend of Sabbath Schools, Missions, and especially ministerial education."—*Turney's Discourse, p.* 13.

for a stranger; to his own church it must have been peculiarly affecting. After detailing the reasons which might be supposed to operate against his leaving a people endeared to him by so long a friendship and so steady a confidence, he proceeds thus: "Do you then ask me, why leave us? My answer is, not that I love the Baptist church and society less, but that I love the body of Baptists, and the multitudes who are destitute in the United States, more. During my whole ministry, I have felt constrained by a sense of duty, to devote much attention to works of religious charity, and especially, for several years past, more time than is consistent with the highest advantages of a particular church. Besides, I have felt a deep solicitude, for some years, in the moral condition of the West. Plainly, a mighty effort must be made [there]; and by the body of evangelical Christians in the Atlantic States; and made soon, or ignorance and Popery, heresy and infidelity, will entrench themselves too strongly to be repulsed. And, in that case, it is morally certain, that our republic will be overturned, and our institutions, civil and religious, will be demolished. To the existence and success of the projected Baptist Home Missionary Society, it is indispensable that the whole time and energies of some man should be devoted; and our friends, whose opinions ought to determine questions of this sort, have said this work belonged to me."*

Mr. Going's request was granted, 'after an expression of regret from many of the members by words and tears, that circumstances had led to this result.' The connection of pastor and church had been harmonious from the beginning, and the society had become large and prosper-

* Records of the Baptist Church, p. 63.

ous. In leaving them he carried with him their confidence, affection and gratitude. Resolutions testifying the highest respect for his character, warm esteem for his person and earnest thanks for his services, were unanimously passed by the society, and cordially adopted by the council that ordained his successor.*

Retiring from Worcester, he took up his residence in the city of Brooklyn, N. Y. There, as Corresponding Secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, formed in 1832, he was indefatigable in his labors; and perhaps no man did more than he in calling attention to the claims of the new association, and securing the coöperation of the churches. Among other instrumentalities employed for this purpose, was the establishment of a new periodical, called the American Baptist and Home Mission Record. Of this weekly sheet he was both proprietor and editor. His duties as Corresponding Secretary of a growing society did not prevent him from conducting this paper with efficiency for a number of years. His efforts to promote the cause of home missions were not in vain. Perhaps no five years of his life were more useful than those which he devoted to the service of the Home Mission Society.†

When, in 1831, Dr. Going made his western tour, besides aiding in the formation of the Ohio Baptist Education Society, he coöperated in laying the foundation of

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* Records of the Baptist Church, p. 68.

† In speaking of what had been accomplished in behalf of the Baptist denomination in Ohio, since the commencement of the Home Mission effort, Prof. Stevens testified, in 1842, 'The Am. Bap. Home Mission Society has exerted a very large share of this influence. When it commenced its labors among us, many of the elements of religious prosperity were wanting, and those that did exist operated but feebly. Since that period many have been created—all have been greatly strengthened.'—*Turney's Discourse, p.* 15.

Granville College, the by-laws of which he made himself. In 1836, he was invited by the trustees to take the presidency of the institution and its theological professorship. Inclined to accept this invitation, he resigned his secretaryship in the society of Home Missions. 'In accepting his resignation, the executive committee expressed their confidence and personal esteem, their sense of the obligation the society was under for his faithful labors in organizing and advancing its interests, and their earnest desires for his continued usefulness and prosperity.'*

Leaving Brooklyn, he removed to Granville, and immediately entered upon the duties of those new offices to which he had been appointed. In his inaugural address, delivered August 8, 1838, he promised his 'best endeavors in conjunction with his learned and respected colleagues in the board of instruction, to make the institution what its public-spirited projectors designed.' If unremitting diligence and uniform faithfulness, with much self-denial, were a fulfillment of that promise, then it was amply verified. In both the literary and the theological departments of instruction, his services were cheerfully rendered and much valued. He gave direction to the studies of a goodly number of young men, who are now efficient laborers in the Christian ministry.

While thus devoting himself to his duties in the college, he was not indifferent to the interests of learning, morals and religion throughout the state which he had adopted as his own. Every enterprise that had for its object the improvement of the people in knowledge and virtue, found in him an earnest friend. In January, 1844, he attended the

* Turney's Discourse, p. 16.

Sabbath Convention held in Columbus, at which he eloquently advocated the divine institution of the Sabbath, and the importance of its right observance to our national prosperity. The State associations for home and foreign missions, for education and Bibles, were often cheered by his presence and aided by his voice. 'By the churches in Ohio his worth will not soon be forgotten.'

Thus 'diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,' he remained at his post until the early part of the summer of 1844. Declining health then sent him on a short visit to his eastern friends. The Commencement in July found him in his place, with health apparently improved. Soon, however, disease renewed its attack, and his death ensued, Nov. 9, 1844.

It cost him a severe struggle to cease from those efforts which the cause of Christian philanthropy so much needed; but to the evident will of God he was enabled to bow with calm submission. As he approached the solemn crisis before him, sickness in a measure impaired his intellect and clouded his vision; but when his powers rallied so that he was sensible of his condition, he expressed entire confidence in the Saviour whom he had so long served, and in the sweet serenity of a Christian anticipated his departure.

In summing up his useful services, Mr. Turney says: "As a devoted and consistent philanthropist and Christian, as a faithful and successful pastor, as a zealous promoter of temperance, Sabbath schools and education, both general and ministerial, as an active and useful trustee in several institutions of learning, as one of the founders of Newton Theological Institution, as a servant of the Triennial Convention, and for many years an honored member of its

board of officers, as the President and Theological Professor of Granville College, and especially as the originator of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, his name deserves to be held in fond and lasting remembrance."

The following suggestions respecting some particular points that stood out prominently in the subject of this sketch, may neither be impertinent nor useless.

Dr. Going, richly endowed by nature, did much for himself by study. He had great quickness of perception, and all his mental acquisitions were rapid. His temperament was warm and genial; his habit of mind hopeful and buoyant. In social life he greatly endeared himself to all who enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance. He had vast stores of anecdote and a rich vein of humor. Conversation rarely flagged in interest where he was present. The overflowings of his social being were too constant and abundant, his nature altogether too magnetic, to admit an awkward formality or a chilling silence in the company which he frequented.

He had a large amount of practical talent. Bent on doing good, he was quick to perceive and prompt to avail himself of the means to this end. While he did not overlook the importance of distant results, he was gratified and stimulated by immediate effects. In his church and parish, in schools, in ministerial associations, in benevolent societies and in the pulpit, he acted on the persuasion that he had something to do then and there, nor could he content himself unless conscious that he was doing it.* In accom-

* From an address of his delivered to a General Convention of Baptists at Cincinnati, in 1833, the following is extracted: "The thing wanting is, that all Christians should feel the responsibility of their high vocation, that they

plishing his plans, he exhibited both energy and perseverance. No slight obstruction could check his progress, no trifle turn him aside from a worthy purpose. He would 'cast his bread upon the waters,' though he was not to 'find it till after many days.'

He was also courageous. What he thought to be right, he would do, no matter who favored or who frowned. He was neither ashamed nor afraid to pursue his own reasonings to their legitimate conclusions, nor to utter and advocate those conclusions when reached. On an occasion of deep interest to him, a very rich man sent the sum of twenty dollars as a contribution in behalf of an object which Mr. Going had advocated as of the highest moment to the ministry and the churches. The pastor of the wealthy contributor proposed that a vote of thanks should be passed for such timely and liberal aid. 'I object,' said Mr. Going. 'He have a vote of thanks for twenty dollars? I will be the last man to help pass it.'* He was then young, and it required not a little moral courage to take such a stand. But he would not outrage his sense of propriety by voting thanks where he believed no thanks were deserved.

He was not destitute of generous and catholic sentiments. While his own convictions were firm and not to be set aside or disguised from fear or favor, he accorded to others the same liberty of thought and speech which he claimed for

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should all fully imbibe the spirit of Christ, who so loved the world that he came to die for men, and who while he lived went about doing good; that they should all imitate the first Christians, whom the love of Christ constrained to spend and be spent in efforts instrumentally to save sinners; that they should all keep distinctly in view the great object of living, *to do the greatest possible amount of good in the least possible time.*'

* Fisher's Discourse.

himself. He would neither be bound in his own conscience, nor would he bind others. Not backward in persuading others to believe and act with him, when he could not succeed, he cheerfully acknowledged their right and privilege to cherish their own faith and concert their own measures. If his difference of opinion with others was too great to be reconciled, he could agree to differ with them. "Forbearing and forgiving, some of his friends thought he did not stand enough for his right when connected with other denominations; but in reply, he said, in a manner I shall not soon forget, 'I never shall be sorry that I showed them too much kindness.'"*

He was characterized by self-denial. To do good was almost a passion with him; and, in obedience to that passion, he cheerfully sacrificed what hardly one in a thousand would have been willing to give up.† Few men performed more labor in doing good without reward, than he. He traveled hundreds of miles, and I may say thousands, solely to do good. He contributed also liberally to every object which to him seemed likely to produce good—up to his means and beyond them.‡

His piety was ardent and unquestioned. The great reason why he labored so indefatigably for the good of men was, that he desired, above all things, to promote the glory of God. Though full of vivacity and abounding in humor

* Fisher's Discourse.

† "Whatever the good of the cause has seemed to require, he has always been willing with his labor, his property and every thing else, to do to the extent of his abilities."—*Turney's Discourse, p.* 19.

‡ "Some said it made no difference how much you gave him, he would spend all; but it was not so, he was never tried with more than a moderate salary."—*Fisher's Discourse.*

when in society, he walked with God. He cultivated intimate 'fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.' 'Praying to his Father in secret, he was rewarded openly.' He was interesting and often powerful in the pulpit, because of previous intercession in the closet. He was not afraid to die when supposed to be on the verge of the grave, because the life of a Christian had made his faith strong and his hope bright. Under trials of peculiar severity, his piety sustained him. Sorely afflicted in his domestic life,* he exhibited in an eminent degree the cheerfulness and patience of hope. He did not see how one who has true confidence in God as a righteous moral governor and in Jesus Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, can be habitually seeking for darkness and turning away his eyes from the light. 'Rejoice in the Lord always,' was more to him than an exhortation which was pertinent eighteen centuries ago; it had for its basis a reality which must be incorporated into his own experience.

As a preacher, Dr. Going had his strong points, and often produced deep impressions. A bold aspect, rich, mellow voice and freedom of action; a rapid analysis, ready analogies and a good command of language, gave him more than ordinary power over the minds of an assembly. He could say striking things, in a striking manner. The main points of his discourse jutted out, so as to arrest attention; and hence they rarely failed to make a place for themselves in the memory. His preparations for the pulpit

* Dr. Going was married to Miss Lucy Thorndike, of Dunstable, Mass., Aug. 1811. A woman of excellent spirit, she would have been the light of his eye and the joy of his heart; but much of the time after her marriage, she was deranged. Her decease in the Lunatic Asylum of Ohio recently occurred.

were not made with the profoundest study; still, they contained no little apt instruction for the class of minds that he was called upon to address. "He often had reasoning and argument in his preaching, but he preached more by apt illustrations and moving appeals to his hearers. It was a mixture of doctrinal, practical and experimental. Generally having selected his subject, [he concentrated his powers] and did much in a little time. He had a power to enter into a subject, and survey all its parts and bring them into order so as to present them to others with ease, with a rapidity truly wonderful."*

From the structure of his mind and his habits of study, his sermons must have been very unequal. Now, he would hold an audience completely under control, alternately moving them to tears and smiles; at another time, he seemed to be shorn of his strength, and his sermon was vacated of almost every element of power. According to his mental mode, the same sermon would be at one time instinct with life and electrify his hearers, at another, comparatively dry and tame.†

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* Fisher's Discourse.

† He once preached by appointment on his way to an Association. It was Monday, and several clergymen were among his hearers. He seemed to labor hard, and made but little progress. It was with great difficulty that he could put 'right words in right places.' Regretting his want of success after the effort, he said to a young clergyman who heard him the evening before, 'Last night that sermon went well.' The friend assented, and declared that it was an extraordinary production. Dr. G. added, '*To-day I had to get help up every hill.*'

TEMPTING GOD,

OR

SEPARATING ENDS FROM MEANS:

A SERMON,

DELIVERED TO THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN WORCESTER,

BY THE

REV. JONATHAN GOING, D. D.

NOTE.

This is not presented to the reader as one of Dr. Going's most finished productions, but as a specimen of his ordinary preaching. It has been kindly furnished for this work by Mr. Williams of Springfield, Ohio, who married Dr. Going's second daughter. The society who formerly listened to his voice and enjoyed his instructions, will clearly perceive the "image and superscription" of the pastor whom they so highly esteemed, on every page of the discourse.

SERMON.

MATTHEW 4 : 5—7.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down : for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee ; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

The devil, from the beginning of the world, has been an enemy to mankind. He brought death on our first parents by seducing them from their obedience to God. And he endeavored to defeat the design of our redemption, by tempting the Redeemer to destroy himself. In both cases he used the same artifice,—a perversion of the word of God. In the former case, he perverted the divine *threatening ;* in the latter, the divine *promise.* He told our first parents, that though they should eat of the forbidden fruit, they would not surely die : he told our Redeemer, that though he should cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, he would surely live. The tree of knowledge God had guarded by a threatening of death. Satan alleged

that this threatening did not really intend what it seemed to import. God had promised the Redeemer, that during the time of his ministry he should be under the protection of angels, who would keep him in all his ways. Satan interpreted this promise, as containing more than was really intended; and in proof of his interpretation, he urged, that if Jesus should cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple no hurt would ensue.

The promise which he adduced, is in the 91st Psalm. "There shall no evil befall thee; for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." That this promise had a respect, (as to good men in general,) to the Son of God in particular, is evident from the words that follow: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." The devil, in his temptation of Eve, presented himself under the form of a *serpent*. Hence, both in the Old and New Testament, he is called by the names of a serpent, an adder, and a dragon. The conquest of the seed of the woman over Satan, the tempter, is expressed by his bruising the serpent's head. In this passage, quoted from the 91st Psalm, there is an evident allusion to the sentence on the serpent. Hence it is natural to conclude, that the whole promise had a particular respect to him who was to tread Satan under his feet; and insured to him the special protection of divine providence, until his work should be accomplished. The devil justly applies this passage to Christ; but he wickedly leaves out a part of it, and perverts the meaning of the whole. He insinuates that as Jesus was under a promise of divine

protection, he had no occasion to take care of himself; and whatever he might do, the promise would secure him. "If thou be the Son of God; if thou be the promised seed of the woman, who was to be born without the intervention of man, and therefore eminently to be called the Son of God; if thou be that person, as, by a voice from heaven, thou wast just now declared to be, then, to make it manifest to the multitude assembled below, cast thyself down from this pinnacle; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." The devil here leaves out a material clause. The promise was, that the Messiah should be kept *in all his ways*. The devil, omitting these last words, insinuates that Jesus, if he were the Son of God, would be kept, though he went *out of* his way, and cast himself down from the pinnacle. Thus, the emissaries of Satan often mutilate the Scripture, when they pretend to quote it. To prove that religion consists not at all in piety to God, but wholly in the social virtues, justice and mercy, the authority of the prophet has been adduced; "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy?" The words immediately following, "and to walk humbly with thy God," are omitted, because they enjoin piety. This is quoting Scripture as the devil quoted the passage in the Psalms.

And as Satan mutilates, so he *perverts* the passage. He argues from it, on this false principle, that where God has promised an event there is no occasion for human means—that the event will take place let men do what they can, or omit what they will. Christ answers, "It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." His words import

that to plead God's promises as a reason for the neglect of plain duty, is not to trust, but to abuse his promise—not to secure, but to forfeit his care.

The devil, in his attempt on the Saviour, failed of success; but among the wicked and unbelieving part of mankind, he finds this artifice to have great effect. In Christ there was nothing, but in wicked men there was much to favor his temptations.

Our Lord always acted, and he taught his disciples to act, on this principle; "That the providence of God over men is exercised in concurrence with human means, and that, when the proper means are neglected, the care of providence is forfeited." Jesus had a promise of God's protection; but he did not commit himself to men, for he knew what was in men. And until the time of his death came, he took the same precaution to shun dangers, and to preserve his life, as if no such promise had ever been made. He assured his disciples that during their ministry, the hand of providence would be employed in their defence; but yet he instructed them to consult their own safety by all prudent and honest means. "If they persecute you in this city, flee to another. I send you forth as sheep among wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." He promised them that if they should take up serpents, or drink any deadly thing, they should not be hurt. This promise was a great security, while they adhered to their duty; but no longer. If their enemies should attempt to destroy them by serpents or by poison, God's providence would preserve them. But if they, themselves, in pride, vanity and ostentation, should

handle serpents, or drink deadly poison, the promise would be no defence.

There is, in the divine government, a connection between means and ends,—between conditions and promises. If we attempt to break this connection, we rebel against that order which is a supreme law of heaven, and yield ourselves to the dominion of the devil. He would persuade men to disregard this connection, and to rely on promises without performing conditions.

After Noah went out of the ark, God promised him that while the earth remained, seed time and harvest should not cease. What if every man, relying on this promise of a harvest, should neglect seed time? Would there be a harvest? Or, if there were none, would God violate his promise? By no means. The promise evidently intends this, and no more than this: that, generally, the course of the seasons shall be regular and favorable; and where seed time is improved a harvest will follow. But still, if the sluggard will not plough because of the cold, he shall beg in harvest and have nothing. God fulfills his promise in giving the times of sowing and gathering, and in causing his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon our fields. His blessing does not fail. But if we neglect the necessary means of obtaining a harvest, we cast away the blessing, and can claim no benefit from the promise.

There is, perhaps, no promise in the Bible expressed more absolutely, than that of a harvest; and yet every man knows how to understand it. I presume no man, on the fact of this promise, ever refused to sow his seed, or, when he had sown it, left it to be devoured by beasts; for every man knows that, though harvests in general do not cease,

yet *he* shall have none, unless he takes the necessary steps to obtain one. The sluggard, who will not sow, never thinks of charging the barrenness of his field to the unfaithfulness of God. For in matters which relate to the necessary business of life, men usually reason and judge rightly. It is in things which respect religion, that they most frequently abuse and pervert the promises of God, and admit the doctrine of the devil—that when God has declared his intention of an *end*, we need not do any thing to *obtain the end*, or avoid any thing through fear of defeating it.

We will consider some cases in which men reason with themselves, and with one another, just as Satan reasoned with our Saviour.

I. Some say, "The Scripture declares that God will have all men to be saved, and none to perish, and that he gave his Son to be a ransom for all." "Now," say they, "if it be God's will that *all* should be saved, and the Son of God have ransomed *all*, then *all* will be saved; for who can resist God's will, or defeat his purposes? His power is equal to his benevolence; both are infinite, and the end is certain. It is, then, of no importance what men believe, or what they do. The vicious and impenitent are as safe as the penitent and virtuous; and infidels are as safe as believers."

But all this reasoning is founded in a perversion of Scripture and of nature.

1. It is founded in a perversion of Scripture. This, indeed, says, God would not that any should perish; but it adds, He would that all men should come to repentance. It says, He would have all men to be saved. And it sub-

joins, He would have them come to the knowledge of the truth. The passages, therefore, teach us, that unless sinners and unbelievers do repent and embrace the truth, they cannot be saved, but must perish. The Gospel, indeed, asserts that Christ gave himself a ransom for all. But *how* for all? Not that all might be saved in their sins; but, "that the mercy of God might be unto all them that believe." The grace of God that brings salvation, has appeared unto all men, teaching them to deny ungodly and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly, and *thus* to look for the hope of salvation through Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people.

2. The reasoning under consideration is as contrary to nature as it is to Scripture. For habitual wickedness is itself inconsistent with rational happiness. If the impenitent sinner is to be happy in his impenitence, the whole system of nature must be inverted. The Gospel scheme was introduced not to prescribe to men arbitrary terms of happiness, but to propose to them such terms as are essential to their happiness. They are not in danger from the Gospel, but from their disobedience to the Gospel. It is not this that has made sin the cause of misery. It is the nature of sin to produce misery. Grace has interposed for our deliverance. If we will not accept this deliverance, we must take the consequences of our perverseness.

II. The same abuse is often made of the doctrine of *Election*.

That there is a divine election of persons to eternal life, the Scripture tells us; and serious people, though they may differ in their manner of stating it, yet generally admit it

in substance. To explain this doctrine is not our present intention, but to correct the abuse of it.

There are some licentious people, who, either foolishly mistaking, or wickedly perverting the doctrine, plead it in excuse for the indulgence of palpable iniquity. They say, "If there be a certain number chosen to salvation, and all the rest be reprobated to destruction, why need we concern ourselves about the matter? We cannot alter the decree of God. If we be elected to salvation, our impenitence will not deprive us of it; and if we be reprobated to misery, our repentance will not save us from it. We may resign ourselves to our fate, for the purpose of God will stand."

But where do you find in Scripture such a kind of election as this? We are told that God hath chosen us to salvation through *sanctification of the Spirit*, and belief of the truth; but not that any are appointed to salvation without faith and holiness. We are directed to make our calling and election sure, by adding to our faith all the virtues of the Christian character; and we are told, that if we do this we shall never fail; but we are nowhere taught that election is made sure to men, whether they have in them these virtues or not.

Whatever may be our different conceptions of God's decrees, so much is plain, that the Scriptures teach no decrees but such as ascertain the end by a course of means, and insure benefits on certain qualifications and conditions. Our business is with the means and conditions. By the observance of these we are to secure the blessings—not to expect the blessings in the neglect of these. To argue from election, that there is no need of our attending to our own sal-

vation, is to adopt the reasoning of Satan, who would have Christ plunge himself headlong from a pinnacle of the temple, relying on God's promise, that angels should bear him up in their hands, and that his foot should not be dashed against a stone.

The Gospel makes the offer, describes the nature, and states the terms of salvation. The terms are repentance of sin, and faith in the Redeemer. On our compliance with these terms, salvation is secured to us by promise. While we reject them we are under condemnation. Thus far our duty is plain, and the way of salvation is obvious. It is also certain that there is no hidden purpose, which will set aside the express word of God. He is in one mind; none can turn him. "Secret things belong to God; things that are revealed belong to us and our children, that we may do the words of his law."

Though many, from the decrees of God, argue themselves into licentiousness in their *moral* conduct, yet none will allow the same argument to influence their *worldly* conduct. No man will throw himself down a precipice, depending for security on a decree which has fixed the bounds of life. No man will say that if the term of his life be not run out, a fall cannot hurt him. No man in a dangerous sickness, will neglect the means of recovery, presuming that the decree of God will save him without the use of means. No man permits seed time to pass unimproved, on the presumption that the decree of God will bring him a harvest, without his seeding or cultivating his ground. Here most men argue rationally and act prudently. They believe that there is a regular providence on which they are dependent for every thing, and that in order to

receive the blessing of providence they must occupy the powers and apply the means which they possess. Here the government of providence is an argument for industry. Whence is it that so many argue differently in matters of religion? The reason is obvious. The duties of religion are disagreeable to them, and they wish to be excused from them. The interests of the world are pleasing to them, and they pursue them with ardor; and hence the same doctrine which is an argument for negligence in the former case, is an argument for diligence in this.

III. In much the same manner some abuse the doctrine of God's grace in the *conversion of sinners*. The Scriptures often tell us that we are saved by grace; that our renovation is a work of God; that faith is his gift. Hence serious and humble souls take encouragement to work out their salvation: for if the grace of God works in them, there is hope that they may work with success. But the negligent and careless argue differently. They reason with themselves as the devil reasoned with our Saviour. They say, "If conversion be the work of God, then it is not our work, and we need not concern ourselves about it. If he is pleased to work a saving change in us, we shall be saved; if not we must suffer the consequences, and we cannot prevent it." Now this argument you may just as well use in your secular business. You at once see the absurdity of it in this case: it is equally absurd in the other. It is not pretended that you can renew your own souls, and prepare them for heaven independently of God. But repentance and faith must be your own acts and exercises. And you are to consider that God, of his free, sovereign grace, has put into your hands the means of faith and repentance, and

affords the influence of his good Spirit to accompany them. While, therefore, you are in the use of these means, you are in the way in which God ordinarily grants his blessing. Attend to the means and trust God's grace, as you attend to your secular business and trust his providence for success.

But is it not dishonoring the grace of God to think that we must do any thing for our salvation? Let *me* ask, Is it not dishonoring the providence of God, to think that you must do any thing for your daily bread? It is not dishonoring God to seek his blessing in the way which he has prescribed. If you presume on his grace in any other way, you do not magnify but mock it; you do not trust but tempt the Lord.

IV. The doctrine of the final *perseverance of the saints*, has often been perverted, in the same manner as other doctrines of grace.

The Gospel teaches us that true believers are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; that those who are born of God do not commit sin, nor yield themselves to obey it; for in the language of the Scriptures, he that committeth sin is the servant of sin. They who are born of God do not thus commit sin; their seed remaineth in them, and they do not sin, because they are born of God.

Some will say, "This certain perseverance of saints we fully believe, and we trust we have been born of God. Our salvation, therefore, is sure; for God's promise will never fail. We may live as we list: we may return to our sins, and be safe; for they will never separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

But do you call *this perseverance*? It is apostasy; and

such a kind of apostasy, too, as clearly proves that you were never born of God; for it is the character of him who is born of God, that he does not commit sin, nor become a servant of sin. What? Because God has promised to preserve true believers unto salvation, will you conclude that *you* shall obtain salvation, even though you pervert this grace to encourage yourselves in iniquity? Such perversion of grace is an evidence that you are not true believers.

You are never to depend on any past experiences as evidential of a new heart, unless these experiences are permanent in their operations and effects. The promise of eternal life is made to those who seek it by a patient continuance in well-doing. If you refuse to seek it in this manner, you have no title to the promise. "If any man draw back, God has no pleasure in him."

The believer's security is not in a promise that he shall obtain salvation, even though he should return to a course of sin; for there is *no* such promise; but it lies in a promise of all necessary grace, to prevent a total and final relapse. This grace he obtains by waiting on God in his appointed way. This is the language of godly souls: "Shall we sin because we are under a promise of grace? God forbid. How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

V. When any measures are proposed for the spread and promotion of the Gospel, they who, from unbelief or avarice, are unfriendly to such measures, often say, "God has promised that he will give his Son the heathen for an inheritance, and the utmost part of the earth for his possession; and will he not make good his promise? What occasion is

there for us to be at any expense or trouble in the matter ?" This is arguing exactly as Satan argued: "Cast thyself down from the temple, for God has promised that he will give his angels charge of thee." It is, indeed, plainly foretold and expressly promised that the Gospel shall spread and prevail in the world; and we believe the event will be realized. But then it is also foretold how this event will be brought about. It shall be by the zeal and labor of Christians to send the Gospel abroad in the world. And whenever we see Christians remarkably engaged to extend the knowledge and influence of the Gospel, then we may hope the good work is begun. God will effect this work as he does other great works for the benefit of mankind; not by an immediate and miraculous power, but by employing, supporting and succeeding human laborers, as his subordinate agents.

The spread of the Gospel after Christ's resurrection was agreeable to previous predictions and promises; but it was effected by the labor and preaching of ministers, and by the zeal and liberality of Christians to support them. And God wrought with his ministers to confirm and succeed their preaching. The future spread of the Gospel, which is so often foretold in Scripture, will, like the past be effected by God's blessing on human means.

God has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church. "Why then," some ask, "need Christians and ministers be so much concerned about the church ? Why so much talk and preaching in favor of the church, and against infidelity ? If the promise can be depended on, infidelity will never subvert the church." They never will; because there will always be a competent number of

witnesses to oppose and confront them, and in defence of the truth. And, thank God that there is such a number at the present day. But if the time were ever to come when there would be none to plead for the truth, but all would silently yield to the influence, and comply with the will of its enemies, the church would cease of course. We trust that there never will be such a time. This may be the case in particular places. And wherever it is the case, the church in that place will cease, as it has done already in many places where it once existed. But it will at no time be the case universally. There will always be a church somewhere. If it should be depressed, it will still exist, and will again rise from its depression. And the time is coming when all nations will see and admire it. In the mean time, we should be solicitous to maintain it among ourselves. We should enter into it, labor to preserve its purity, and according to our ability, contribute to the enlargement of its borders, and the advancement of its interests. And at a day when a great and effectual door is opened; when on the one hand, there are many enemies, and on the other many of the friends of Zion seem to be engaged in her cause, we should cheerfully afford our aid and concurrence in so important a work.

The subject teaches us that neither in this case nor in any other, ought we to make the promises of God an excuse for the neglect of our duty. The good which God promises he always brings about by the use of means, and in concurrence with human agency. And if, when God has promised a benefit, we neglect the means of obtaining it, we pervert his promises and forfeit the benefit. His promises are designed to excite obedience, not to encourage neg-

lect. We are to trust in him and do good, and in well-doing, to commit ourselves to him as a faithful Creator. When we wait upon him in the way of duty, then we trust and honor him. But when, presuming on his promise, we neglect our duty, we mock and tempt him. And it is written, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

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§ 4. Rev. Frederic Augustus Willard.

When Dr. Going was absent on his western tour in the summer and autumn of 1831, Mr. Willard was employed to supply his place in the pulpit of the First Baptist church. He and Mr. Abbott, then pastor of the Calvinist church, coöperated in sustaining a union prayer meeting on Sabbath evenings, 'which marked the commencement of a general religious awakening that resulted in adding nearly three hundred members to the three evangelical churches then existing in the town.' On the resignation of the pastoral office by Dr. Going, Mr. Willard was with great unanimity invited to succeed him. He was offered a salary of $500. His ordination took place, Jan. 18, 1832. On that occasion, Rev. John Green of Leicester and Rev. Otis Converse of Grafton, performed the introductory services; Rev. Henry J. Ripley, Professor in the Newton Theological Seminary, preached the sermon; Rev. Jonathan Going addressed the church and people; Rev. William Hague of Boston, gave the right hand of fellowship: and Rev. John Walker of Sutton closed the services with prayer.

Mr. Willard officiated as pastor of this church about

three and a half years. During his ministry the subject of temperance was brought prominently before the minds of his people. In 1834, "it was declared to be the strong and deliberate conviction of the church, that the time had arrived, when no professed disciple of Christ could manufacture, buy, sell, or use ardent spirits, as a beverage, without being guilty of immorality, and violating his profession as a Christian; and it was resolved, that entire abstinence from the manufacture, use and sale of this article, should be an invariable condition of membership and good standing." The church was considerably enlarged while Mr. Willard was their pastor, and though called to part with him after a comparatively short ministry, were soon ready to settle a successor with prospect of increased strength and efficiency.

Rev. F. A. Willard is a native of Lancaster in this County. When quite young, he was graduated at Amherst College in 1826, soon after that institution received its charter. During his collegiate course he made such proficiency in natural science, that he was invited in the winter of 1827 to give the course of Chemical Lectures at the opening of the Vermont Medical University at Woodstock. For several years afterwards, he continued to fill the chair of Chemistry and Botany in that institution. His theological studies were pursued at the Newton Seminary, at which he was graduated in 1830. The year following he declined an invitation to become Professor of Chemistry in Waterville College. From Jan. 18, 1832, to July 30, 1835, he was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Worcester. Leaving this place he became Junior Pastor of

the First Baptist Church in Newton.* In May, 1839, he left New England for the South and became pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky. His services there were acceptable to the church, and the connection was one of mutual pleasure. In 1842, the long illness of his wife rendered it necessary for him to leave. After her death, Mr. Willard returned to Kentucky and accepted a professorship in the Louisville College, in which he continued till the inadequate coöperation of the city council induced a simultaneous resignation of all the college officers. In 1848, he became Superintendent of the Louisville Tract Society and City Mission. In November of the following year having returned to his native State,† he became pastor of the South Baptist Church in Danvers. His pastoral relation to that church still continues.

Mr. Willard's style of address in the pulpit may be inferred with some degree of accuracy, from the paragraphs which follow. They are taken from a sermon on the "certainty of moral retribution:" GALATIANS 6: 7. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

"It is worthy of our consideration that the disposition to be deceived, the wish that moral retribution were not true, has respect only to criminal inclinations and acts, and not to those which are holy. The world are very ready to listen to the word of God when it reads, 'Say ye to the

* He had a few months before married *Mary Winchester*, daughter of Seth Davis, Esq., of Newton. Mrs. Willard departed this life after protracted illness, in November, 1842.

† "The defeat of the friends of emancipation in the election of the Kentucky Convention for Constitutional Reform, and the consequent confirmation of slavery in Kentucky contributed to the purpose of returning to my native State."—*Letter of Mr. W. to the author.*

righteous, it shall be well with him, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings;' but when it is added, 'Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him,' then they are disposed to explain away the meaning of terms till nothing alarming is left. Or while ready to receive one declaration in its broad and far-reaching application, the other, so intentionally similar in form, is to be taken only with such limitations and restricted application, as practically to remove or allay the fear of transgression.

"How many of you whom I address to-day, do I meet in this temper of mind so natural to fallen and sinful man. The young, in all the ardor of expectation, picturing pleasure in the unrestrained indulgence of youthful appetite; mature men and women, too intensely earnest in getting earthly treasures, to hear the saying of the Son of God, 'I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you;' the aged, so confirmed in life-long habits of neglecting God, that it is irksome and offensive to them, even to be asked to think of their obligations to him;—some of you with unblushing avowal, and others with vague and silent hope, trusting that you shall *not* reap what you have so long been sowing. Is there not, therefore, fitness in introducing this subject to you, as it is introduced in our text? *Be not deceived.*

"You all understand the principle on which we can never safely trust the judgment of a criminal in his own case. You know individually that you have broken the law of God. In his sight, therefore, by your own admission, you are criminals. Is it not then contrary to all experience that you should appear to yourselves as guilty as you seem

to any impartial and sinless being? Yet you have sought to quiet your fears about the personal consequences of sin, by doubting whether human transgressions *deserve* that dreadful end which is revealed in the Scriptures. Again I ask, are you and I fit judges of what our own sins deserve? Aside from the incompetency occasioned by self-love, our knowledge of the nature and extent of our relations to God and to created beings is so very limited that we are utterly incapable of estimating the real nature and tendencies of sin; as we are also profoundly ignorant of its terrible and probably unlimited mischiefs to the universe. While you are endeavoring to justify or palliate your transgressions, they must appear immeasurably different to Him who never found one day of perfect obedience in your life, and whose government you will be under forever.

"Besides, such of you as have *succeeded in doubting* those endless consequences of sin which the Bible reveals, have practically taken that doubt as a means of banishing alarm about *any consequences whatsoever*. And now consider that many of your sins are deliberate and intentional violations of the known will of that Infinite Being who made you. Weigh the sentiments and operations of mind by which you have quieted your fears and got rid of all distress on account of these sins, and then decide yourself, I pray you, whether it be possible that a man in such a state is in his right mind. I beseech you to decide whether one who has achieved such a victory over his own reason and conscience, is not mournfully deceived already. Is there any probable truth in conclusions, or rather in *doubts* which have produced such shocking insensibility to your own guilt? Will you then cherish a security which you have been building

on so suspicious a foundation as your dislike of a life of piety, and you sitting in judgment upon your own case? When all your appetites and wishes, as an acknowledged sinner, are on one side of the question, that is *Wisdom's* voice, which rises clear above the din of human passion, and comes to you in tones earnest and solemn, *Be not deceived.* Listen then. And seek to be guided for an endless life, with all the caution, and patience and earnestness, which become an immortal being who has confessedly wandered from the path of right.

"There is practical guidance for our actions in knowing their consequences. And this inspired utterance, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,' is a proclamation of consequences. It indeed compares acts and their results in figurative terms and with a pungent brevity, which does not always enable us to determine the precise form of harm or advantage which a particular act may bring upon us. But it will teach even a child, *that good acts must have a good end and bad ones a bad end.*"

§ 5. Rev. Jonathan Aldrich

Was the fourth pastor of the First Baptist Church. He was invited to become their minister, October 17, 1835, and installed over them, the 27th of the same month. The Rev. Baron Stow of Boston preached the sermon; Rev. Abisha Sampson of Southborough gave the charge; Rev. Charles O. Kimball of Methuen offered the prayer; Rev. Frederic A. Willard presented the right hand of fellow-

ship; Rev. Charles Train of Framingham addressed the people; and Rev. John Walker of Sutton closed the services with prayer.

Mr. Aldrich is a native of St. Johnsbury, Caledonia County, Vt. He pursued his studies preparatory to entering college, in the academy at Peacham, Vt., and with the Rev. Abial Fisher of Bellingham. He was graduated at Brown University, in 1826. He entered the Theological Seminary at Newton and remained there one year. Laboring with the Baptist Church in Dedham during the vacation that followed his first year at Newton, his services seemed to be greatly blessed, and he was induced to remain there as their pastor. His ordination took place in Dec. 1827. During his two and a half years' ministry in Dedham, forty-five were added to the church—a number considerably exceeding that of which the whole church consisted when he was ordained. Leaving Dedham,* April, 1830, he became pastor of the Baptist Church in Beverly in the following May. Unusual attention to spiritual interests soon manifested itself and continued with scarcely any abatement or intermission for three years. In this time, one hundred and forty-nine were baptized into the fellowship of the church. Leaving Beverly, Mr. Aldrich was transferred to East Cambridge in 1833. His ministry in Worcester, commencing in 1835, continued till May, 1838. Under his administration, the church was enlarged by an addition of two hundred and eighteen members—one hundred and thirty-two of them on profession of their faith. The house of

* Mr. Aldrich was married during his residence in Dedham, to Miss Catharine P., daughter of Mr. Asa Lewis of Boston, now of Worcester. The date of this union was April 2d, 1828.

worship, erected on the site of that which had been burnt, was dedicated in 1836, and Mr. Aldrich preached on the occasion from the words, *Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, forever.* Ps. 73 : 5.

Since his removal from Worcester,* Mr. Aldrich has been settled over a Baptist Church in Philadelphia, and another in Baltimore ; he has labored about one year as Secretary and Agent of the N. E. Sabbath School Union ; and he is now pastor of the Baptist Church in Framingham. Large accessions have been made to the churches of which he has had the pastoral oversight, making the sum total more than eight hundred. In a single year, while in Philadelphia, he admitted to the Central Baptist Church, one hundred and fourteen.

A sermon from the pen of Mr. Aldrich has been submitted to the disposal of the author, the whole of which would be inserted were not his supply of materials more ample than the necessary limits of this volume. He is obliged therefore to restrict himself to the following selections. The subject of the discourse is " the priceless value of the soul." MARK 8 : 36. *What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* Its method of treatment is thus stated : " 1. The infinity of the soul's duration ; 2. Its exalted and ever-expanding powers ; 3. Its immense susceptibilities : 4. The price paid for its redemption."

A persual of what its writer says in expanding the sec-

* When Mr. A. left Worcester, the church passed the following commendatory resolution :—" That we hold his character as a vigilant, peace-making, able pastor, in the highest estimation, and acknowledge our obligations ever to be grateful to the giver of every good and perfect gift, that we have been permitted to enjoy his faithful ministry."

ond and fourth divisions, will give a view of the bearing and scope of the whole sermon.

"2. The preciousness of the soul may be argued from *its exalted and ever-expanding powers*. Certain it is that 'there is nothing more noble or improvable than the human soul.' Its faculties are capable of immense expansion, even during the brief period of mortal existence, and under all the disadvantages of that existence. Its powers in an infant are discovered to be feeble; but they grow with its growth and strengthen with its strength. Every acquisition of new knowledge expands its capacities, and prepares it for still further investigations. Nor can any acquisitions, however extensive, satisfy its lofty aspirings; it is continually soaring after acquaintance with objects which it has not yet attained. And the wider and deeper its researches, the more are its powers strengthened, and the better is it qualified to make still more exalted attainments. Such is the soul of man in this incipient state of its being.

"But, is it reasonable to conclude that this power of expansion, this power of rising higher and yet higher in intellectual greatness, will be limited to the present life? If the soul is endowed with intelligence, as one of the prominent ingredients of its being; and if, in this dark and miserable world, united to its cumbrous clay, it is susceptible of continual progress in knowledge and improvement, will not this susceptibility be inconceivably augmented when the soul shall be freed from its prison of clay, and enter the eternal world? There, where its noblest powers will be continually tasked to prepare it to grasp the elevated and elevating themes and objects that will occupy its contemplation, will not those powers receive an expansion of which

we can at present form but a very inadequate idea? Let it be prepared by the grace of God for the mansions of the blest, where every thing is adapted to awaken the highest interest, and call forth its mightiest energies; and who can conceive the elevation to which the soul will arrive, as the ages of its happy being shall roll endlessly onward? In such circumstances, man, in his intelligence, will be continually approximating towards the image of the all-wise God, until it shall surpass all that the saints in glory and the angels of light have ever yet attained! O, how exalted *intellectually* will the soul of man become in that eternal world of joy; ever expanding under circumstances the most felicitous, during the ages of its immortal existence!

"But this is not all. Man possesses *moral* as well as intellectual powers; and these too are susceptible of immense improvement. High moral excellence is attainable during his present state of existence. Let the truth and spirit of God renovate his powers, let the soul be created anew 'in righteousness and true holiness,' and the moral excellence of man's primeval state is restored to it, the image of God is again enstamped upon that soul. And, dark as may be this world, and numerous as may be evil influences on every hand, the child of God may continually grow in grace, till he arrives to 'the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus'; till he shall 'be filled with all the fullness of God.' And if divine grace can so adorn the soul, can impart increasing excellence to it, in this world, where sin abounds, and innumerable temptations exist; what may we not expect, when it shall enter the Paradise of God, behold the Redeemer as he is, witness the unvailed glories of God, and experience the transforming efficacy of that bless-

ed vision? Ah! when the ransomed soul shall see him as he is, he shall be like him. He leaves all his imperfections, as well as sorrows, at the grave, and enters the eternal world a holy and happy being. But there his moral excellence is not to remain stationary. As intellectually, so morally, he will be continually rising higher and higher in beauty and glory for ever and ever. If this be true, then is it not reasonable to suppose that there will come a period in eternity, when a single ransomed soul shall possess an amount of excellence and glory surpassing that of the highest seraph that now adores before the eternal throne? How inconceivably exalted then are the powers of the human soul; and how precious must be a soul possessed of such endowments. What is the world, yea, what is the material universe, in comparison with such a soul?"

"4. We may look at the preciousness of the soul in the light of *the price paid for its redemption.* And here we frankly acknowledge the utter inadequacy of our powers to comprehend such a subject. Could we ascend to heaven and behold the majesty and glory of the Mediator, with powers adequate to comprehend such a being; then, by the dignity of the victim sacrificed, might we judge of the value of the sacrifice.

"This infinite being, 'God over all, blessed forever,' paid the price of the soul's ransom by inconceivable agonies in the garden and on the cross. If a less sacrifice could have accomplished the object, God would never have taken his only and beloved Son, and made his soul an offering for sin. Among men, the preciousness of any thing is measured by the price paid for it. So we infer the great price of that pearl which the merchant went and sold all

he had, and bought. On this principle, we learn the value of the soul. The greatest work which God has ever performed, and the mightiest sacrifice he has ever made, have been for the souls of men. This is a subject of the deepest mystery, and of overwhelming interest. But this much we can understand, that he has done nothing like this for the angels that kept their first estate; and he has done nothing like it for the angels that did sin, and need redemption as much as ourselves. This interposition and sacrifice stamp the preciousness of the soul beyond all calculation, and beyond all other considerations. If, then, for their redemption, God has sacrificed the most exalted and excellent being in the universe, is there any thing on earth too great to be given up for their welfare? Shall any be so charmed with the trifles of earth, that they will be willing for them to sacrifice the interests of their souls? Could we gain the whole world, and enjoy it during a period as lasting as the earth's existence, what would it all be, contrasted with the loss of the soul? 'The titles of sovereign, monarch, emperor, would naturally charm little souls like ours. Sumptuous palaces, superb equipages, a crowd of devoted courtiers, bowing before us, and all that exterior grandeur which environs the princes of the earth, would naturally fascinate such feeble eyes, and infatuate such puerile imaginations as ours.' But what are they? Could they mitigate the pangs of the second death? Nay, would they not rather heighten by contrast those pangs? As one observes, 'Death puts an end to the most specious titles, to the most dazzling grandeur, and to the most delicious life: and the thought of this period of human glory reminds me of the memorable action of a prince, who, although he was a

heathen, was wiser than many professing Christians; I mean the great Saladin.' After he had subdued kingdoms, and 'performed exploits more than human, in those wars, which superstition had stirred up for the recovery of the Holy Land; he finished his life in the performance of an action that ought to be transmitted to the most distant posterity. A moment before he uttered his last sigh, he called the herald, who had carried his banner before him in all his battles, and commanded him to fasten to the top of a lance, the shroud in which the dying prince was soon to be buried. Go, said he, carry this lance, unfurl this banner; and, while you lift up this standard, proclaim, *This, this is all that remains to Saladin the Great, the conqueror, the king of the empire, of all his glory.*'

"Every Christian minister is called to perform the office of this herald; to hold up before men, sensual and intellectual pleasures, worldly riches and human honors, and reduce them all to the price of the shroud in which they will shortly be buried. How sad the thought that any, for such trifles, should sacrifice their eternal welfare! Let that soul, then, which is infinitely precious, be duly regarded by all; and let none rest, till they have satisfactory, scriptural evidence that it is prepared for the immortality of the heavens."

§ 6. Rev. Samuel B. Swaim.

The church, left without a pastor by the dismission of Mr. Aldrich, engaged Mr. Swaim to supply the pulpit, in November, 1838. In April of the year following, he assumed the pastoral relation with the First Baptist

Church, and still continues to minister to them in holy things.

Mr. Swaim is a native of New Jersey. He was graduated at Brown University in 1830, and at Newton Theological Seminary in 1833. His ordination as a minister of the Gospel took place the same year in Haverhill; and he supplied the pulpit of the First Baptist Church in that place for several months. In 1835, he was invited to fill the theological professorship in Granville College. He occupied this position about two years; when the embarrassed condition of the institution rendered it expedient to unite the duties of theological instruction with those of the Presidency. The Rev. Dr. Going having been called to preside over the college, Mr. Swaim returned to New England. His services were soon in requisition by the First Baptist Church in Worcester, and having entered upon his duties as pastor in 1839, he has performed an acceptable ministry among them for more than eleven years. In these years, considerable accessions have been made to the church, the society has been large and flourishing, and the harmony of feeling between the minister and his people indicates continued and increasing prosperity.

This closes the account of the First Baptist Church in Worcester. The author would gladly have given extended illustrations of the Pulpit of this church, had he not been limited by want of space. He has no doubt that an entire sermon from each of the pastors would be both readable and instructive; but the pages which they must have occupied were not at his command, and 'that which is wanting, cannot be numbered.'

CHAPTER V.

CALVINIST CHURCH AND ITS PASTORS.

§ 1. *Formation of the Church.*

This church was organized, August 17, 1820. Difficulties had arisen in the First Church which occasioned the dismission of five of its members without recommendation to any other church. Others who desired to be dismissed and recommended, were denied their request. A number of individuals requested dismission and recommendation, with a view to the formation of a new church. Their desire was not granted. The aggrieved sought the advice of a council. The council met Feb. 19, 1819, and recommended those who had been dismissed from the First Church without recommendation, to the fellowship of the churches. Several, not receiving letters to other churches, 'attached themselves to a religious society of another denomination, and usually worshiped with them, although they still communed with the First Church at the sacramental table.' June 2d, 1820, the church, acting on the principle affirmed by a council called to advise in the preceding May, that uniting and worshiping with another denomination, and withholding pecuniary support, was virtual separation, declared that these individuals had, by their own acts, cut themselves off from the privileges of their church-membership.

On the 2d of August, 1820, Dea. Richards and Mrs. Richards, who had been admitted to the church in Ward, (now Auburn,) with eight individuals who had been separated from the First Church, under the operation of the principle above stated, sent a letter missive to the churches in Franklin, Northbridge, Sutton, Millbury, Upton, Wrentham, and Ward, and those of Park Street and Old South in Boston, inviting them to deliberate on their case and give advice as to future action. The council convened on the 16th of the same month. The Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, D. D., was chosen moderator, and the Rev. Enoch Pond, scribe. After a protracted hearing of the whole case submitted to them, the council were unanimously of the opinion that it was expedient to organize the individuals who had sought their advice, into a separate church. An extract from their result follows: "Under these circumstances, the council being satisfied with the confession of faith and covenant* which the applicants have proposed to adopt, *voted unanimously, that they do approve their being constituted a regular church of Christ*, under the name of the Calvinist Church in Worcester."

"After the council had published the foregoing result, and the applicants had signified their acceptance [of it], the council proceeded to organize and establish them into a separate church, under the name of '*The Calvinist Church in Worcester*,' August 17, 1820."†

"Subsequently, proposals were made by the First Church, on conditions which did not meet the views of the new organization, to submit to a mutual council the whole

* Appendix I.

† Records of the Calvinist Church, p. 12.

subject of existing difficulties. Conferences were held by committees of the two bodies, terminating, after protracted negotiation, in the conclusion, that it was possible only to agree to remain separate."*

The Calvinist Church and those associating with them for religious purposes, held a meeting on the 8th of February, 1822, to organize a society, according to the laws of the Commonwealth. The Hon. Daniel Waldo and seven others, bound themselves to meet the expenses of supporting public worship for five years.

The church and society thus organized, regular worship was commenced the first Sabbath in April, 1822, in the Court House. This continued to be their place of worship about one year and a half. Different individuals supplied their temporary pulpit, until Oct., 1822, when the gentleman who afterwards became their pastor, was engaged to preach for a few Sabbaths. In the following March, he was invited to settle with them, and was ordained their pastor and teacher, October 15, 1823.

Remonstrance was offered by the First Church against the ordaining council's proceeding to comply with the request of 'those persons styling themselves the Calvinist Church;' and the remonstrance was supported by reasons strongly set forth; but the council determining that the body which had organized the Calvinist Church had reason for their action, and that their action was evidence of its regular existence, disclaimed authority to reverse the decision or annul the acts of that body, and declined receiving the remonstrance.

A house of worship, erected by the Hon. Daniel Waldo,

* See Lincoln's Hist., p. 214.

for the use of the new society,* was dedicated to the service of Almighty God the same day, on which the ordination of the first pastor took place. The introductory services on that occasion were performed by the Rev. Benjamin B. Wisner of Boston; the sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Austin, then of Newport, R. I.; and the prayer of consecration offered by the Rev. Samuel Green of Boston.†

The difficulties existing for years between the First Church and the Calvinist Church had excited painful interest not only in those more immediately concerned, but in a large circle of clergymen and churches. In June of 1827, at the meeting of the General Association of Massachusetts, this interest manifested itself in the form of an earnest desire of removing its cause. Several of the distinguished ministers who composed the body for that year, united in drawing up a letter of advice, in the hope of softening the asperities of opposing interests and producing a reconciliation between the parties at variance.‡ This letter was

* This house, built in 1823, was altered in 1830, by contracting its galleries, reconstructing its pews and pulpit, and substituting a steeple for its 'cupola.' In 1832, the parties concerned agreed upon an enlargement of the house by adding both to its length and width. It is now 93 feet in length and 57 feet wide. The height of its spire is 130 feet. There are 94 pews on the floor.

† "The house, and the land upon which it was built, were conveyed, July 9, 1825, by Mr. Waldo, for the use and benefit of the church and society. A donation of $5000 was added to this great benefaction. The interest and income were secured to be appropriated towards the payment of the salary of such pastor as should have been elected, ordained, and settled, conformably to the rules and usages of Congregational Calvinistic churches and societies in this Commonwealth."—*See Lin. Hist. p.* 216.

‡ The letter is in the words following:

"To the Calvinist Church in Worcester.

After much anxious and prayerful deliberation, and influenced, we trust, by love to God and love to man, we the subscribers have felt it our duty to offer the following advice:

written, June 27, and on the day following, in compliance with its earnest and affectionate recommendation, the members of both churches united in partaking of the Lord's Supper, 'as a public testimonial of their intention to reëstablish and maintain Christian fellowship.' From that period, the relations between the two churches have become more and more friendly, and, for years, nothing has occur-

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In view of the difficulties which exist between the First Church and the Calvinist Church in Worcester, and of their unhappy consequences upon the churches of Christ and the cause of religion generally, it is our opinion that these difficulties ought, without delay, to be settled; and, although those who were organized as the Calvinist Church have erred in some of their proceedings and are not in all respects in accordance with ecclesiastical usage, particularly in reference to the proposal made to them of a mutual council;—and, although the First Church have erred in some of their proceedings, and were not in all respects in accordance with ecclesiastical usage, particularly in reference to the discipline of the persons organized as the Calvinist Church;—yet that they may, notwithstanding, considering their present situation, consistently with duty, acknowledge each other as churches of our Lord Jesus Christ; and we do affectionately and earnestly recommend them to do it, and in the following manner, viz.

That this proposal be submitted to each of said churches, and, if accepted by them, that the Moderator of the General Association, be requested, previously to the communion tomorrow afternoon, to read this document and invite the members of these churches to unite in participating of the Lord's Supper on that occasion—the doing of which shall be regarded as a public testimony of their intention hereafter to maintain Christian fellowship."

(Signed) THEOPHILUS PACKARD,
LYMAN BEECHER,
HEMAN HUMPHREY,
JUSTIN EDWARDS,
WARREN FAY,
B. B. WISNER,
JOHN NELSON,
ENOCH POND,
HORATIO BARDWELL,
JOSEPH GOFFE,
JOHN FISKE.

Worcester, June 27, 1827.

red seriously to interrupt their harmony. At this present writing, it would not be easy to designate a collection of churches in any place better united in sentiment or more harmonious in action than the congregational evangelical churches in Worcester.

The Calvinist Church and Society have increased in numbers and influence from year to year ever since their organization, and now present an inviting and promising field of labor to him who so acceptably ministers to them in holy things. Their pastors and teachers have served them with commendable fidelity, seasons of special religious interest have occurred which have added many to the church, and they have occasion to exclaim with gratitude, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.'

We turn to a more particular consideration of the Pulpit connected with this society. Its first occupant was the

§ 2. Rev. Loammi Ives Hoadley.

He was ordained over the Calvinist Church, October 15, 1823. The public services of his ordination were thus conducted. Introductory prayer, by Rev. Joel Hawes of Hartford, Ct.; sermon, by Rev. Lyman Beecher, D. D. of Litchfield, Ct.; ordaining prayer, by Rev. Edmund Mills of Sutton; charge, by Rev. Elisha Fisk of Wrentham; right hand of fellowship, by Rev. Baxter Dickinson of Long Meadow; address to the people, by Rev. William B. Sprague of West Springfield; closing prayer, by Rev. Benjamin Wood of Upton.

Mr. Hoadley was born, Oct. 25, 1790, at Northford, Ct., then a parish of Branford. He received his classical education at Yale College, where he was graduated with honor, in the class of 1817. His theological course was at Andover, with the class of 1820. He was there a fourth year, as resident licentiate on the Abbott Foundation. He came to Worcester to supply the Calvinist Church, Oct. 1822. While officiating here, he was invited to the church in Baltimore, which was afterwards under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Nevins. A preëngagement here prevented his acceptance of the invitation. He was also invited to go to Taunton; but receiving an earnest call to settle with the church to which he was ministering, he gave an affirmative reply, and entered upon this sphere of duty with the hope and the prospect of a useful ministry. The year following his ordination, he married Miss Lydia, daughter of Mr. Eli Smith of Northford, Ct., and sister of Rev. Eli Smith, D. D. of Beirût, Syria. He continued his labors with this church and people, often embarrassed by the difficulties incident to the unhappy relations subsisting between this church and the First, but with increasing success, till the first Sabbath in June, 1828. Then by an incautious use of his lungs when suffering from a severe cold, he induced such injury about the chest, as to incapacitate him immediately and for many months from preaching, and from which he has never entirely recovered. In 1829, he thought it his duty to ask the discontinuance of his pastoral relation, and was accordingly dismissed by vote of the church,* May 19th of that year, with the understanding

* When this vote was passed, the following testimonial was ordered to be put on record:

that their action should be confirmed by the council that might be called to ordain his successor. Their doings in this respect were sanctioned by such council, Dec. 9th, 1829.* In the winter term of 1829–30, Mr. Hoadley officiated for Dr. Porter of Andover, during the absence of the latter at the South on account of his health. He was invited to become the pastor of the church in Bradford a few months afterwards, and installed there, October 15, 1830. The state of his health forbidding a long continuance there, he was dismissed at the expiration of a year and a half, and removed, in the autumn of 1832 to Charlestown. There he devoted himself to various literary pursuits. During the last year of its continuance he edited "The Spirit of the Pilgrims." Subsequently he was employed in several editorial labors, particularly in connection with the Mass. Sab. School Society. He also assisted the Rev. Dr. Jenks in preparing for the press "the Comprehensive Commentary," abridging and condensing Henry and Scott, and collecting notes from other authors. In the spring of 1844, Mr. Hoadley removed to Northford, Ct., his native place, where he has since resided. For the last six or seven years, he has divided his time between teaching, agricultural labors, and preaching as opportunity and health permitted. He has recently been invited to take

"This church take this opportunity to express their sympathy with their beloved pastor in his trying circumstances; and they hereby express their entire confidence in him as a faithful minister of the Gospel, and their gratitude to him for his faithfulness while laboring in the ministry in this place."
Records of Calvinist Church, p. 48.

* The Council voted, "That the pastoral relation of the Rev. Mr. Hoadley to the Calvinist Church and Society in Worcester be now dissolved, and that he be recommended to the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a regular and faithful minister of the Gospel."

the pastoral oversight of the congregational church in Orono, Me.

The following discourse by Mr. Hoadley was prepared in the course of his regular ministrations in Worcester. It was occasioned by the death of an aged member of his church, whose decease occurred during an epidemic influenza. This may account for the selection of the topic. The reader may not accept all the conclusions reached in the sermon; possibly he will regard some of them as lying within the circle of those 'secret things which belong to God'; yet he will be interested in the evident aim to make —as Dr. Backus was once said to make—"*God very great*"; and also to bring man very near to God.

DIVINE AGENCY,

OR,

GOD'S HAND IN ALL THINGS:

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED IN THE

CALVINIST CHURCH, IN WORCESTER,

BY THE

REV. L. IVES HOADLEY.

SERMON.

ISAIAH 45 : 7.

I form the light and create darkness : I make peace and create evil : I the Lord do all these things.

Some ancient philosophers supposed the empire of the world to be divided between two independent beings of opposite characters ; the one the author of all good, the other the author of all evil. Thus they accounted for that mixture of pleasure and pain so constantly experienced in life ; attributing the pleasure to the agency of the good being, and the pain to the agency of the evil being. Where Christianity is received, no such views of course are entertained ; and in a Christian community every sentiment ought to be worthy of the light enjoyed. It deserves to be considered, however, whether there are not, sometimes, even in Christian communities, sentiments and views unworthy of the Christian name. How often, without recognizing the providence of God, prosperity and adversity are spoken of as the results of mere human agency, or of blind casualty.

The association of thought which led to the use of the terms in the text, is not important to be ascertained. The

sentiment of the passage is clear, be the origin of the terms what it may. And what the text presents is: *The Providence of God*,—or, *God's hand in all things*. Disowning fate and chance, it teaches that whatever takes place, takes place according to the good pleasure of God; in other words, that nothing is fortuitous, but every thing connected with the *purpose of God*. The prophet speaks in the name of God, and what he means to assert is the universal agency of God in all things. The passage has reference to both the natural world and the moral; and it declares alike of good and of evil in each, that it is of God, —that it comes through his good pleasure in appointing it, or in not preventing it.

That the subject may appear in its true light, let the following things be considered:

1. *God is the originator, or creator of all things.* Evidence of this is incontestible and overwhelming. No argument is more full, or clear and certain, than that which proves the existence of an *intelligent First Cause*. The most simple inductions from consciousness, observation and reflection, bring us irresistibly and at once to the conclusion that there is a God. Atheism is weak, foolish, and ignorant, as well as inexcusable and wicked. Nor is infidelity any better. The polytheism too of both ancient and modern times is rebuked out of countenance by one sober look only of enlightened reason. "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1: 20.

The origin of all things, then, is with God. "In the

beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1 : 1. This declaration is general and comprehensive. It includes all things. Though not yet disengaged, all agents are there in mass—light, air, land, and water; the sun, moon, and stars; and all animals,—the leviathan of the deep, the war-horse of the valley, and the behemoth of the desert; bodies, fluid and solid, gross and subtle, visible and invisible, tangible and intangible. To every element and thing, and creature, God gave existence, in order, with all the laws of its operation, providing for all changes in the unorganized, and for all reproductions, as well as changes, in the organized, whether vegetable or animal. Moral beings also, angels before, and man after; God made them all, and gave to all their several powers and capacities, and all their susceptibilities for bliss or woe. Every thing that exists owes its existence to God. He alone is uncreated and eternal. He *was*, when all else *was not*. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." John 1 : 3.

2. *God having made all things, sustains them, preserves their relations, and gives them their efficiency.* Created things can have no inherent power or efficiency independent of God. This is intuitively manifest. For to suppose they have, would be to suppose God has given to them a part of his own incommunicable perfection, which is absurd. Besides, suppose God when he had made all things, had withdrawn from them his sustaining, or preserving, or efficient agency, what must have ensued but the instant return of all things to non-existence, or the utter confusion and ruin, or absolute stagnation and deadness of all things?

Now that God did not withdraw himself is evident from

the fact, that things do exist, and have their appropriate relations, and action. All the activities of nature are in constant operation before us. We witness it in every thing around us, and in ourselves. Through the atmosphere admitted into our lungs we breathe. So food received into the stomach is acted upon, and turned to the support of the body. In relation to the mind, also, the presentation of thought produces action, and results in knowledge, choice, approbation or disapprobation. There is too, this independent fact, to account for some changes: While God has constituted nature with all her activities, He reserves still to himself to act efficiently when and where He will, over and above nature, as in miracles, and to introduce a new creative act, as in regeneration.

3. *God is superior to all things, or has all things under control.* This, too, is an intuitive truth. We see it without reasoning. And no proposition can be plainer. Why any difficulty then, as to *control?* Yet here many find difficulty. God may create, and sustain, preserve in being, and impart power to act, but that He should direct and control the action, especially as to some agents, from this they revolt, as if horror struck.

But why revolt? And why so distrustful of control? Why not as cheerfully acknowledge the evidence of *control*, as that of *support*, or of *efficiency?* Nay, why not welcome with great satisfaction, the evidence of *control?* For, are there not agents, various and numerous, from which, supposing them to be sustained, and the power of action imparted to them but that they are *not* under *control*, any thing most appalling might be expected? The whole creation is full of such agents. The sun, the wind, fire and

water; the power that heaves in the earthquake, and belches in the volcano; electricity, gravitation and magnetism,—all these, silent and gentle though some of them are, and unobserved, almost, except by the philosopher, or the practical man whose business makes him acquainted with them, how mighty and all-pervading their influence! And who can give assurance for that influence against instant disorder and confusion; nay, the destruction, not of our globe only, not of the whole solar system merely, but of the entire physical creation? These are powerful agents in physics.

Nor are there wanting powerful agents in the animal creation. God said:—"The fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air; upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered." Gen. 9: 2. But suppose He had not said this; and that no restraint had been laid on animals; who can tell if man would ever have gained ascendency over them? And in circumstances of exposure, what havoc might any time ensue from the attacks of the wild and ferocious?

Nor are these agencies all. Man himself is a powerful agent. Possessing a higher attribute,—the rational, he can employ both the physical and the animal. He can construct a battle-ship, and make a warrior of an elephant. And having such powers, and being at the same time corrupt and sinful, what a perfect Aceldama might he turn the world into, but for the restraints by which he is held in check under the providence of God. Judging from what has been, and what is yet in the world as the result of

human wickedness, what might not be feared, were not "the remainder of wrath restrained."

And further: beings still higher than man, have powers more enlarged and efficient. And who can tell if the power of superior beings over man may not be as great, if permitted, as man's is over nature and the inferior animals? especially as we are informed of a single angel, who being commissioned of God, cut off 185,000 human beings in one night! 2 Kings, 19: 15. And through the entire spirit world, taking this as a specimen, what might not be expected from their agency, if there were no regulator, no controlling power?

How, then, is it? When God first began his work, and created angels, when afterwards He spake the planetary system into being, balanced the orbits of the heavenly bodies, and ordered their respective revolutions; when in relation to our world He established principles, and individualized agents; when He made the animals so quick and powerful; and when, finally, He formed man, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life:—when now He had finished all his work, and had pronounced it "very good," did He withdraw and leave it all? Numerous, powerful and various as are the agents He has created; has He left them to operate at random? Or, governing and controlling a part, is a part so peculiar in the nature of its structure, that, now that He has made it, He cannot overrule it, and turn it to good account? Is it so, that having made it, if now He sustain it only, its movements are beyond His control? And is it so that He cannot put forth the finger of His power, and in perfect harmony with the freedom of its own operations, direct it at His pleasure?

Absurd; absurd. No; says the instinctive response of all harmonious voices: No; his hand is ever *there* upon the helm of universal nature. Inanimate and animate, irrational and rational, and rational of the lower or higher order, God rules over all alike. "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." Ps. 50: 10. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?" Dan. 4: 35. "He covereth the heaven with clouds." "He causeth his wind to blow." Ps. 142. He rides upon the storm, and directs in the tempest. Nay, amidst life and freedom, and forethought, and calculation, in intelligent moral beings; amidst passion even and purposes the most determined and resolute; amidst all agencies, His is the controlling hand. "Even the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Ps. 76: 10. All—every thing is under God's control.

Is it objected that this makes us machines? The objection is rash, inconsiderate and unsound. It does *not* follow, because God rules and governs us, that we are machines, or deprived of our wills. The exception taken is unphilosophical. Nature has her operations, and they are her own. Drought and mildew and famine, the cold of arctic regions and the heat of equatorial, the sirocco of the Arabian desert, and the hurricane of the Caribbean sea, are all the legitimate products, as we say, of natural causes. And there is a correspondence between cause and effect in every thing. Even in relation to the destruction of our own globe, of which we read in Scripture that it shall take place, we are warranted, in view of modern sci-

ence, to believe, that the earth contains within itself all the elements necessary for the mighty effect, whenever God shall commission them to the work. So in relation to the movements of the heavenly bodies, and whatever depends upon them, as day and night and the seasons of the year, were it not for the constitution which God has established and continues to uphold, all would fail at once. And where principles so broad, agents so subtle and powerful, are concerned, were there not some controlling agency, which of course none can exercise but God, instant and overwhelming ruin might occur any moment. The thought may well fill us with awe and reverence; and yet, while thus exposed but for God's control of every thing, the thought that through that control we are safe and may feel secure, should no less awaken our gratitude, and our adoring praise.

Nor let any doubt that the Scriptures inculcate these views of God's universal agency and control. They every where represent Him as the God of the natural world as well as of the moral. "He appointeth the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down." Ps. 104: 19. Most powerfully as well as beautifully is this illustrated in that passage in the book of Job, in which the Lord answers Job out of the whirlwind. In that God claims every thing for Himself.

But the difficulty, after all, lies not here. Few have any difficulty in admitting the providence of God in natural things. It is in morals they meet the difficulty. God may take care for sparrows so that not one shall fall without His notice; but men yet impenitent care not that He should be 'just for themselves' quite so particular in His attentions. They desire not the knowledge of His ways.

And here lies the difficulty; men are afraid to trust themselves with God; and so they dread his control.

And not to deny that some good men have had trouble on this subject, it may yet be confidently presumed that their trouble has grown not out of their piety, but out of their speculation and want of more piety. And though we allow that some good men may have honestly desired to disembarrass the truth as far as possible, yet the difficulty in most cases may, undoubtedly, be set down as having its origin in the region of distrust, or at best in the neighborhood of that curiosity and aspiring desire which seeks to be wise above what is written, or at least above others.

Let us see how the case stands. That God should have control over inanimate nature, and the animal creation, with the heavenly bodies, is not objected to; but that He should have control over the minds and hearts of moral agents—to this it is said in the first place, "If it be so, we do not understand it;" and in the second, and therefore perhaps, "We do not believe it." "Indeed, it would seem to be impossible," it is added, "that God should *control* free moral agents; for then, how should they be *free?*" So some say.

But not so our text. Not that there is any infringement on moral agency or freedom; for here, too, in morals, as in physics, nature's operations are all her own. From the sports of childhood up through the sober scenes of life, and onward to the greatest and most important transactions, every thing goes forward according to the chosen way of those concerned; and there is, in the constituted powers of every animated existence, a just and proper foundation for the development of whatever phenomena it exhibits. We

say of each and every creature that its actions are its own. This is true of man as well as of other creatures. We form our characters for ourselves, and every one sustains his own responsibility. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it." Prov. 9: 12.

But from this who shall infer that God has no control over us, 'to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor'? And how does it appear so certain that God can have control over the planetary, the physical and the animal world, but not over the moral? Truly, it must be strange, admitting that God has control over every thing else, to infer that He has none, and can have none, over moral agents. It surely were to be expected that He would have control over the more important, and where his honor is most concerned. And superior or inferior, physical or moral, who can think that agents of His own formation, creatures who have received from Him every power and faculty they possess, and the circumstances of whose existence have all been determined by Him—who can think that, now that they are created, and placed in circumstances as they are, they should, any of them, be out of the range and beyond the reach, or above the power, of His Infinite hand? Is it not absurd, impious, daring?

No; while we allow to nature her appropriate agency in each and every department, the agency of God must not be overlooked. Science, reason and religion recognize it. Scripture includes it everywhere. Cause and effect are made so by God's agency. His hand is in every thing. And how manifest this truth throughout the word of God. Witness the destruction of the old world, that of Sodom

and Gomorrah, the plagues on Egypt, the deliverance of Israel and their preservation in the wilderness, the standing still of the sun in the valley of Aijalon, and the going back of the shadow on the dial of Ahaz, the preservation of men in the fiery furnace, the turning of water into wine by the Saviour and Peter walking on the sea to meet Jesus. All these instances in physics.

And equally clear is the proof in relation to the animal creation. Thus the animals all came submissively to Adam, that he might name them; and they are all subject now to man, as was provided for at first. Special cases are recorded, illustrating their subjection to divine control: the ass speaking to Balaam, and the asses of Saul's father straying away that Saul, while in search for them might be brought to Samuel the prophet to be anointed king. So the lions in their den, harmless with Daniel, are ravenous and devouring with his enemies.

Nor has God less control over moral agents. Throughout the Scriptures where angels, the highest order of moral agents are spoken of, they are uniformly spoken of as *subject* to the will of God. They come and go at His command. So the angels sent to destroy Sodom are represented as saying, "The Lord hath *sent* us to destroy it." So when one was inquired after to entice wicked Ahab to go up to Ramoth-Gilead that he might fall there, the hosts of the spirit world are represented as attending with all subjection on the right hand and on the left, the Lord sitting on his throne. God will have the king enticed, if he will be, but the thing is nevertheless voluntary with the king, and with him who goes forth to entice him. Yet there is a proffered subjection. So also in Job, Satan,

though glad to do what mischief he may, is represented as acting under limitation and only by permission. In the New Testament likewise, though Satan is spoken of as the god of this world, yet he is everywhere spoken of as under control. Thus, though he had the impudence to tempt Christ, Christ said to him: "Get thee behind me, Satan." So the Saviour showed that devils were subject to his control, inasmuch as He cast them out, as He pleased; and when they might have been boisterous, He would not suffer them to speak. The apostle Paul speaks of Satan as the god of this world, and directs that we pray to be guarded against his devices, which implies of course that he is under subjection to God, who can deliver and protect us. The apostle John also speaks of him as to be *overcome*, *cast out* and *confined;* all which expressions imply his subjection. From all these references it is manifest the sacred writers hold the same view of the subject which I have presented; in other words that the view I have given is the scriptural view, and therefore the true view. It is wicked angels and Satan the leader, mostly, that is had in view; and certainly, if the wicked angels are under control, the point is settled, because as to holy angels, they are obedient, of course.

And how now as to men? Each has his race to run, virtuous or vicious; and each as free as air follows his own chosen way, splendid or obscure, as may be his talents and opportunities. But is it all without divine control? First, country, condition and parentage—by whom are these determined? And from birth onward to the grave, is not every one a creature of providence? Free though he is, he is not independent of God; but God directs him as He will. Even his wickedness, though his free act and deed, is fore-

ordained. Thus we have the whole—the creature's freedom, God's control, and yet the creature's guilt for doing wickedly, in a single passage from Peter on the day of Pentecost: Acts 2: 23. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And again, we are assured, Acts 4: 27, 28, that while "Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together against Jesus," (of their own free will, of course, for it was to gratify their malice,) they were thus gathered, "for to do whatsoever the hand and counsel of God determined before to be done."

And so it is universally. Divine and human agency are blended in every separate transaction and event. Men may find fault, and complain, and cavil, if they will, and say it is not so, and that if it is, we are not accountable; but they cannot alter it; and God will hold them accountable, after all, and govern them too. To deny it, moreover, or think to get round the point of it, by speculation and the mist of fine-spun argument in doubtful regions of metaphysics, is all in vain. The truth will meet us still both in science and in religion; and we can never escape from the manifest fact, that, as God made all things, so He controls all things, and directs their issues according to His good pleasure.

We come, therefore, to the conclusion, look where we will, through all created agents, of whatever name or character, that there is in all the living presence and controlling agency of God, so that though their action is their own, and its results referable accordingly, nothing ever takes

place, or can take place, without His purpose, or in contravention of it; His good pleasure being always concerned in appointing it, or in not preventing it.

In support of this conclusion it may be subjoined, that if such be not the case, then God is so far fairly turned out of His own world, and has no supremacy whatever; while we as His creatures have no security whatever as to what may take place, and no foundation for hope or consolation, since every thing must be left to casualty, and no dependence can be placed on any thing.

But to pursue the subject no further, in general, let us now consider it in some of its more practical relations.

1. *We see in what light we are to regard the events of life.* As noticed at first, they are often spoken of as though God had little or no concern in them. An instance is that of epidemic diseases, or those which alight on whole communities at once, and are supposed to have their origin in some peculiar state of the atmosphere, arising from heat, moisture or dryness, and the like. Coming into the same category are those events commonly called casualties, or accidents. In relation to every thing of this sort, it is not always enough considered, even by Christians, how certainly the hand of God is concerned in it.

And this is what the subject teaches is incorrect and unchristian, to regard providences, events—any thing as fortuitous, or accidental. It is not so. For, as has appeared in the discussion, every thing is ever under the control and direction of the Most High. The most important events in life may depend on the most trivial, and result from them. This we often see illustrated. How well it becomes us, therefore, both as to our duty and our peace of

mind, to remember, in relation to every thing, that God is concerned in it. This should be our comfort, and the medium of pious communion with God.

2. *The subject affords consolation in affliction and sickness.* How different the reflections of the truly pious, in seasons of affliction and distress, from those of the irreligious. The pious, though in trouble, remember that "trouble springeth not out of the ground," Job 5 : 6 ; but comes in the holy providence of God. They view his hand in it, and are comforted. And how much better this than the experience of the irreligious, who instead of regarding their troubles in the light here recommended, consider them rather as calamities, which come upon them, they know not why or how, only that it was to be so, as though a blind fatality alone were concerned.

As we would pass life serenely, then, and be comforted, let us be established in faith, not carried about by every wind of doctrine. Let us cherish the views we have been considering, and remain settled in them, as the soundest philosophy, and the true theology. For,

3. *We have in this discourse the only satisfactory view of the divine character and government.* Indeed, if the doctrine of the discourse be not admitted, I see not but the divine character and government must fail of vindication, and be given up as indefensible ; for, as I have said already, in that case, that is, if the doctrine of the discourse do not hold, God is fairly shut out of his own world ; and things, the agents, powers and creatures, He has constituted and made, are above Him, and He is under the humiliating, painful necessity of doing as well as He can. It is in His heart to do differently—to do better, and all heaven is full

of grief that He does not do better, that there should be so much evil, and He not be able to prevent it!—I say the subject affords the only satisfactory view of the divine character and government; and this is satisfactory, inasmuch as it presents God on the throne: shows Him, not as reduced to the necessity of doing as well only as He can, but as "doing according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou?"

4. *The subject reflects light on the origin and existence of moral evil.* With the Bible in hand, if I be asked why moral evil exists, or was suffered to come into existence, my answer is,

1. Not because God is indifferent whether his creatures sin or not. For, as it could not have entered without his notice, so neither could He have been an unconcerned spectator of its introduction, inasmuch as He must have foreseen what it would result in—all the consequences.

2. Nor was it because God loves evil, or for its own sake chooses it, or has any complacency in it; for then He would be unholy, malevolent, hateful; whereas He is, we know, holy, benevolent, even love itself, and infinitely glorious.

3. Nor was it because God acts upon moral agents in a way to force, or compel, or tempt them to do evil, when, left to themselves, they would not do it; for this would be to infringe, or rather drive their liberty, which we know He never does. Besides, it would make their sin no longer theirs, but His, inasmuch as they commit it only through constraint from Him.

4. Nor was it because God could not have prevented

it; for then we must consider Him limited—limited, too, in a different sense from that in which we say, and say properly and truly, because scripturally, He cannot lie. Lie He cannot, for it would be to deny Himself. Nor is it like saying that He cannot cause the same thing to be and not to be, at the same time, and in the same place and circumstances; for here is a manifest absurdity, and there can be no absurdity in the works and ways of God.

On this whole subject we should ever speak with the deepest humility and the most profound reverence: but we are warranted by the prophet to say of God that He cannot do some things, and we may say so in truth; but the prevention of evil is not, so far as we can see, one of these things. And for aught that appears, that very motive which occasioned the first sin in Satan the first sinner, and the very attitude of mind in which he was, to render that motive prevalent with him at the time, might have been prevented, and prevented, too, without doing violence to his freedom of will, had God chosen to prevent them, and not rather through the permission of evil, to elicit good, and that in a display, which but for the introduction of evil, could not, so far as we can see, have been made of His holiness and grace.

And that evil did not come because God was constrained to admit it contrary to his will, appears, further, from the fact that He does thus overrule it so as to make it a means of good; and from this also that he restrains all excess above what He sees can be employed to this end, or will subserve this purpose. Indeed, if after employing so much of evil as He sees He can employ in promoting his glory contrary to its natural tendency, and the design of the

wicked in committing it, (Isa. 10: 7.) He restrains the remainder, which, but for His restraint, would be committed, it would seem, certainly, that He might have restrained the whole, except that through the permission of so much as is allowed, He chooses to display Himself more fully than otherwise He would be displayed, and to make innumerable moral agents more happy in beholding that display than otherwise they could be.

5. The origin and existence of moral evil, therefore, is to be accounted for, on the ground of God's purpose and good pleasure in *not preventing it.* God only is immutably holy and perfect. Creatures are not immutable. Except, therefore, as He should choose to keep them holy as first He created them, they might change from holiness to sin. Hence foreseeing this, and perceiving how He could make sin subserve the purpose of displaying his own infinitely glorious perfections, and making innumerable moral agents happy in His service and in the contemplation of His holy character, works and ways, He was pleased not to prevent evil, but to suffer its introduction.

Not to conceive of God, therefore, as disappointed in His works, or as having adopted a system he would gladly have declined, we are to regard the system He is operating upon as the one of His choice, and the best; and to believe and trust the declarations of His Word, which, without attempting to explain where we perhaps have no faculties or light at present to apprehend, we must simply refer to the infinite and unsearchable wisdom of God: as did the Saviour, Matt. 11: 26. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

And if we attempt to have any other views of so deep

and mysterious a subject, and are ready to say: "Why doth He yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" let us remember the admonitory rebuke of the apostle to the impious caviler: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"—Rom. 9: 19, 20. It seems evident to account for the existence of moral evil by referring it to the purpose and good pleasure of God in *not preventing it*. It needed not that He should instigate and incite to evil. He needed only not to restrain and prevent. And further than this we seem not to be able to decide upon the subject. Nor is there occasion. This is the view God himself gives in His word. Had He seen best to give us further light in our present state, He doubtless would have given it. Let it be enough that we can trust Him, and know that whatever His creatures may do, He is ever essentially holy and good. Awful—dreadful as sin is, it is matter of joy and devout gratitude to God, that He overrules it, and will overrule it, evermore, to the promotion of His glory.

We have, therefore, in this discourse, as I said, *the only satisfactory view of the divine character and government.* It is the dictate of our consciousness, as moral creatures, and that supported by Revelation, that we exalt God upon the throne, and take ourselves the place of submissive confidence and trust. And this is just what the view we have taken inculcates, while every other comes short of this altogether, especially that which subjects God to the control of creatures, or, which is the same, represents Him as not being able to do with them as He would, if He could.

It is a high and holy as well as mysterious view of God that we are called to take, my hearers: nor can we trifle

with so solemn a theme, and reject it, but at our peril. How, and why, things are as they are, we do not know, and cannot tell, except as has been set forth and suggested. But that God is everywhere, reason and Scripture abundantly teach: and that He is good and holy we cannot doubt. Yet that He has included sin and misery in his plan of operation is certain from what we see around us and experience in ourselves.

Though we cannot comprehend perfectly the divine plan, then, let us believe, notwithstanding, and not attempt to be wise above what, in the present life, it was designed we should be. Knowing that we are sinful, and therefore exposed to God's displeasure, but through Jesus Christ may be pardoned and sanctified and saved, let us go to Him in instant, pressing conviction of our guilt and need, that by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, we may become united to Him, "as the branch is united to the vine." Then we shall have peace with God; and though we shall never in this life fathom the depths of the divine wisdom, we shall yet have no difficulty in believing that He is wise and good, and in submitting to Him as the High and Holy One "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

And now, that we may believe in His providence and agency in every thing, and have such views of His absolute and eternal supremacy, that we shall delight ourselves with the thought that He is on the throne, and that we are in His hand, may He graciously grant us His Spirit, and sanctify us by His truth. Amen.

§ 3. Rev. John S. C. Abbott

Was Mr. Hoadley's successor. A native of Brunswick, Maine, he was graduated at Bowdoin College, in the class of 1825. After teaching in Amherst, Mass., one year, he pursued the regular course of theological study at Andover. His ordination in Worcester took place, Jan. 28, 1830. The following were the services with which he was inducted into the sacred office:

Introductory prayer, by Rev. John Nelson of Leicester: Sermon, by Rev. Joel Hawes of Hartford, Ct.: Prayer of consecration, by Rev. Samuel Green of Boston: Right hand of fellowship, by Rev. Nehemiah Adams of Cambridge: Concluding prayer, by Rev. John Boardman of West Boylston.

During the period of five years Mr. Abbott so performed the work of the ministry here, as to secure in an unusual degree the esteem and affection of his people. In addition to his ordinary pastoral duties, he prepared for the press "The Mother at Home," and "The Child at Home." These works made him widely known as a practical and useful writer. The Mother at Home has been translated and published in nearly all the languages of modern Europe. It is printed in Greek at Athens, and also published in Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope in Africa.

Much to the regret of his people, Mr. Abbott was induced by the state of his health to ask that his pastoral relation might be dissolved,* and, in 1835, his dismission took effect.

* When Mr. Abbott's request for a dismission came before the church, the following resolutions were passed by a unanimous vote;

After traveling a year, he was so far restored to health as to accept an invitation to become pastor of the Eliot Church in Roxbury. He was installed over that church in Nov. 1836, and labored with them about five years. Thence he removed to Nantucket, and for two years was the laborious pastor of the Congregational church on that Island. In 1843, he went to New York to be associated with his brothers in "Abbotts' Institution for the education of Young Ladies." He still remains in New York, dividing his attention between superintending the education of young ladies, and writing for the press. His institution for female education enjoys a very high reputation, and the pen of a ready writer which he wields with so much effect, is in almost constant demand.* Still in the prime of life and the vigor of manhood, much may be anticipated from the labors which he is yet to perform. The following sermon of Mr. Abbott, will be read with interest by a large circle of friends.

"Resolved 1st; That this church do most sincerely sympathize with their beloved pastor in his affliction by that dispensation of divine providence, which, in his view, renders it necessary for him to make a communication in which he requests a dissolution of his connection with this church as pastor.

"Resolved 2d; That the members of this church entertain an undiminished confidence in the piety and talents of their pastor, and do most sincerely regret the necessity they are under of acting upon a subject so deeply interesting to them and to the religious society with which they are associated."

* The following is a list of his more prominent publications:

Mother at Home; Child at Home; Path of Peace; School Boy; School Girl; Visit to the Mountains; Kings and Queens; Maria Antoinette; Madame Roland; The Empress Josephine; Henry IV. of France, is soon to follow.

THE

FUTURE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL:

A

SERMON,

BY THE

REV. JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

NOTE.

It is proper to state that this discourse was written some eight or ten years since. This fact remembered, will add force to some of the allusions in the Sermon, and also explain the absence of allusion to some of the recent discoveries and inventions of the age.

SERMON.

ISAIAH 2 : 2.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.

This poetic imagery delineates the final and universal prevalence of religion. Christianity is a temple majestic and conspicuous, and all the nations crowd its courts in united adoration. There are many interesting indications that this prophecy is soon to be fulfilled. This moral transformation is now in rapid and visible progress. I invite your attention to some of the most conspicuous of the evidences that this world is soon to be christianized.

I. *The political aspect of the globe indicates this approaching change.*—The councils of cabinets, the tramp of armies, the sweep and conflict of hostile navies, are all subservient to the designs of Deity. A few centuries ago, the name of Christ had never been heard by the uncounted millions who roamed over the prairies and through the forests of this vast continent. Then God raised up Columbus with his inquiring mind and adventurous spirit; and overruled the political ambition of the united courts of

Castile and Arragon to supply him with ships for his voyage of discovery; and permitted the proud spirit of the English Church to drive our pilgrim fathers into exile, and sent the submissive tempest to blow them to the rock of Plymouth, where he had previously prepared for them a home by the ministry of the plague which had swept away the savage inhabitants. And now nearly every vestige of heathenism is obliterated from the land, and it is almost certain that, in a few years, this whole new world, from the Arctic Circle to the cliffs of Patagonia, will be inhabited by a professedly Christian people.

Turn your eyes to Africa. The navy of France sweeps across the Mediterranean, batters down the wall of Algiers, and takes possession of the country. Whatever may have been the political motive for this measure, the result which God educes is, that the institutions of Christendom supplant the delusions of the false prophet.

England and America establish their colonies along the western coast of Africa, from Mount Atlas, till her Southern cape is doubled. Though political ambition or mercenary interest may be the inspiring motive, the result is that the naked savage disappears as the European and American take his place; the altars of heathenism vanish as the church spire rises, where the rude temple of idolatry once stood; barbarian chieftains, who have drenched the land in blood, are succeeded by intelligent governors, and constitutions are engrossed, and laws enacted, and courts of justice established, and colleges founded, and schools supported;—and where the miserable hut of the Hottentot or the Caffree deformed the landscape, the embowered

cottage of European or American taste, cheers the eye with its cultivated fields and ornamental garden.

England, to extend her commerce and strengthen her political power, sends her steam ships to ascend the Nile, and stage coaches cross the desert from Cairo to Suez, and the tribes, listlessly lounging upon the shores of the Red Sea behold with amazement the majestic steamer rushing through their silent waters. Thus are the *political movements* of nations crowding into the *Continent of Africa* on every side, and with resistless power, the influences and the institutions of Christendom.

In Asia the same wonderful movement is apparent on a scale of still more astonishing grandeur. Not long ago the Turkish empire was the terror of Christendom. But now, with her janissaries slain, her fleet destroyed, her treasury exhausted, and her empire dismembered by the successful revolt of Egypt and of Greece, Turkey has sunk below contempt. The crescent which now glitters upon the minarets of Constantinople, like the waning moon it symbolizes, is a fitting emblem of Mohammed's departing power.

The Euphrates, the Tigris, the Indus, and the Ganges, are but the great arteries, through which, by armies and by embassies, by diplomacy and by commerce, the enlightened nations are diffusing the science, the arts, and the civil institutions of Christendom through the Asiatic Continent. And the nameless nations who people her vast interior must receive, with these influences, that only religion which can exist with cultivated intellect and high civilization. Even China, with her three hundred millions of imprisoned subjects, has had her doors of exclusion battered down; and the time cannot be far distant when

that mysterious empire shall be open to the commerce and the travel of the Christian world. Thus are all the great political movements of the nations of the earth tending to usher in the universal reign of Christianity.

II. *The progress of civilization and the arts indicate this approaching change.*—A few years ago it required the painful labor of years to copy the Bible, and the wealth of a prince to purchase one. Think of a Bible, such as our forefathers had, written by the slow process of the pen, upon the skins of goats, sewed together, making a roll two feet wide, and ninety feet long. Now, the art of printing scatters the word of God like autumn leaves, and it is found in the humblest dwelling.

Not many centuries have passed since none could read but the learned few. Noble lords, proud barons, powerful kings, and even bishops of the churches could neither read nor write. Now, common schools have brought instruction to every man's door. Knowledge is becoming, like the sunlight, everywhere diffused.

War has ever been one of the greatest obstacles in the way of human improvement. Now, apparently resistless causes are operating to end these scenes of blind demoniac rage.

1. There is, first, the rapid extension of piety, carrying with it the principles of peace, convincing of the iniquity of war, and influencing man to regard his fellow man as a brother.

2. And then there is the extension of information, of enlightened views, of national policy, so that every cabinet in Christendom is satisfied that there is no calamity so disastrous to national wealth and power, as war.

3. Another influence of vast magnitude, is to be found in the rapid descent of power from a few rulers to the people. The time has gone by when the caprices of a king, or the ambition of a favorite courtier, can involve nations in fire and blood. The people who are to furnish the money, and sleep in the tented field, and to be mowed down like grass before the destructive engines of modern warfare, are to decide for themselves the question whether they will live in peace in their dwellings, or whether they will abandon their homes to bleed and to die on the field of carnage.

4. And there is another cause singular indeed in its character, but most influential in its operation. It is the invention of irresistible engines of destruction. The more terrible the instruments of war become, the more reluctant are the nations to expose property and life. Torpedoes, congreve rockets, Paixhan guns, and sub-marine batteries, are indeed horrible instruments of ruin. And they who use must face these weapons. So powerful is the combined operation of all these causes, that it is doubtful whether another war will ever again be waged between any of the leading nations of Christendom.

Involuntary servitude, by which the many have been doomed to ignorance, degradation and toil, to administer to the pride and luxury of the few, is fast passing away. Slavery has existed in every land a formidable obstacle in the way of human improvement. Man has ever been the tyrant over his brother. But the doom of slavery is sealed. Its knell is tolled. The degraded castes of India are breaking their chains. England, France, and even Spain, are saying to the oppressed, "go free." Nicholas of Russia,

on his throne of limitless despotism, from motives of national policy, is endeavoring to elevate his enslaved serfs to the dignity of freemen. And the American slaveholder, (even if his heart remain impervious to justice,) can not long resist the influences which are pouring in upon him from every quarter. Slavery has received its death-blow. The religion, the literature, the popular sentiment of Christendom has said, "it must die."

The wonderful facilities of intercommunication, now making almost miraculous progress, have opened a new era upon the globe. Railroads and steamboats seem to bring the poles of the earth together, and to make neighbors of the most distant nations, breaking down the crumbling walls of prejudice, and effacing the decaying landmarks of hostile division. A good thought, conceived in the silent study chamber of the student, is no sooner uttered than it is echoed by a million voices in the streets of every city, and by the fireside of every farm-house. A useful invention, made in the most secluded spot, is instantly conveyed to earth's remotest bounds. All these causes are tending most powerfully to hasten on the promised millenium.

III. *The present state of the sciences indicates the speedy and universal prevalence of Christianity.*—It is one of the marked sayings of Lord Bacon, that a "little learning tendeth to atheism, but more bringeth us back to religion." Nearly all the sciences in their infancy, in the period of superficial knowledge, have been arrayed as hostile to Christianity. Now, with hardly an exception, they defend and establish revealed religion.

The early astronomer, with but slight glimpses of the

wonderful developments of this magnificent science, supposed that with telescope and diagram he could prove Christianity false. But now in the comparative maturity of this science, when the astronomer sweeps the heavens with instruments of once unimagined power, and passing beyond our planetary system, piercing through the myriads of stars which compose the cluster of our own firmament, discovers, in the infinite abysses of space, other universes, other clusters of congregated suns and worlds—systems of every variety of form and structure, adapted to conditions of being and modes of life of which we can now form no conception, he obtains but the most interesting corroboration of God's word, that in heavenly places there are thrones and dominions, and principalities and powers—that there are many mansions in my Father's house—that God has erected fitting abodes for angel and archangel, cherubim and seraphim. And now revealed religion has not a more admired, honored and efficient coadjutor than modern astronomy. And though conceited ignorance may cling with depraved affection to infidelity, Newton and Herschell find God's works confirmatory of his word.

Geology is rapidly rising to the rank of one of the noblest of sciences, developing the most stupendous facts. Superficial knowledge has boasted that these facts contradict God's word—that the history of creation, given by Moses, is repudiated by the cosmogony of geology. These mists of ignorance are now dispelled, and the sceptic's song of triumph is hushed. On the mountains and rocks, and the mighty mausoleums of the brutes that perish, eclipsing in their grandeur, the gorgeous temple, the monumental bronze, the regal pyramid, God has engraven in eternal

characters, the history of this world during those apparently endless cycles when the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and he has registered there the hour when he said, let us make man; and he has written there the story of those openings of the windows of heaven, and that breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, when the loftiest mountains were submerged in floods of rushing waters. And now, Geology may be called almost a Christian science, and she is converted from an ignorant foe, into an enlightened ally and friend.

Physiology has, in the darker ages of superficial investigation and misinterpreted phenomena, been judged hostile to the claims of revealed religion. And the believer has inquired with solicitude, and the infidel with triumph, how is it possible that one pair, Adam and Eve, could give birth to offspring so widely different as the black man and the white man? How can we reconcile the declaration of God that he made of one blood all the nations, when there are apparently now distinct species of men of such diversity of physical conformation as the jet black Hottentot and the fair skinned Caucasian. But these were the doubts and solicitudes of the day of ignorance. As physiological science has unfolded new developments, and established new facts, it has dispelled forever all those shadowy fears; it has established beyond all question the common origin of the whole human family. Enquire of Lawrence, of Humboldt, of Blumenbach, of any of the most enlightened physiognomists of the present day, and they will assure you that physiology confirms revelation, that, disarmed of all

hostility, she follows, with winning homage, in the train of Christianity's triumphs.

Chronology has, in former years, been claimed as irreconcilably conflicting with the statements of the Bible. And men, with the spirit of Voltaire, credulous in unbelief, have found histories, which they have claimed as authentic, narrating the vicissitudes of mighty nations ten thousand years before the birth of Adam. And in one of the pyramids of Egypt, an astronomical chart was discovered, the famous Zodiac of Dendara, describing the position of the heavenly bodies thousands of years before the chronology of the Bible admits that man was created. For a time, Europe resounded with the shouts of infidel exultation. But soon the truth of Bacon's adage was verified, "a little learning tendeth to atheism, but more bringeth us back to religion."* Farther investigation proved that these ancient histories were fables, and the loud vaunted Zodiac but a painted toy. And now, the chronology of the Bible, and the chronology established by the history and the monuments of antiquity, coincide. Thus, one after another, have all the sciences been vanquished, and compelled to pay tribute to the Christian faith. These are wonderful victories. There is now not a single science, which makes any pretence even of being antagonistic to the Bible. The ripest and the most cultivated intellects of the world, disciplined in the school of the sciences, are now elucidating and demonstrating the divine authority of God's word.

IV. *The past achievements of Christianity prove its eventual and perfect triumph.*—Imperial Rome, earth's master and tyrant, fell prostrate before her. Nor Goth nor Vandal could stay her progress. Even Nero could not

build fires hot enough to burn up her energies. Even the wild beasts of the Coliseum could not daunt the Christian's heart. The philosopher has toiled in vain to undermine the deep foundations of the church, and the shafts of the satirists have fallen harmless from her adamantine shield. The hostility of earth has marshaled every possible power, in every possible combination, against Christianity, and all in vain.

When the idols of Ephesus, of Athens, of the Pantheon, crumble from their pedestals at the approach of Christ, can the miserable feather gods of the Pacific, and the mud idols of India resist his approach? When the Roman empire, in the plenitude of its power, exhausted its energies in bloody persecution in vain, can we fear that earth may furnish other powers of persecution yet more terrible?

When we have seen philosophers, and poets, and historians, and dramatists, and princes, combine with the highest resources of wit and wealth;—and Christianity steadily advancing, notwithstanding all their endeavors, is it to be feared that other literary opponents will be able to accomplish that, which Hume and Voltaire and Gibbon, and Frederic, the conspiring encyclopedists of Europe, in vain essayed?

He who looks upon the past triumphs of Christianity, even though it be only with the eye of a philosophic observer of cause and effect, must admit that the religion of Christ possesses an inherent energy, which must inevitably make it triumphant over the world.

V. *The triumphant advances Christianity is now making, indicate its universal extension.*—When we add to all

the above considerations, the rapid progress of Christianity at the present day—a progress hitherto unparalleled—when we see revivals of religion multiplied through all the nations of christéndom, our cities shaken by pentecostal power, and the most secluded villages reëchoing the song of Christian deliverance; when we see our young men and maidens by tens of thousands, with triumphant and rejoicing hearts, thronging the avenues to heaven, and our aged men, venerable with conflict and toil, exulting in the brightening glories of these latter days; when we see the youth of nearly all christendom in our colleges and higher seminaries of learning, instructed by men of piety, and genius and eloquence, in the most elevated walks of literature and science, consecrating their acquisitions to the cause of Christ, and societies of benevolence collecting the resources and concentrating the exertions of millions of ready hands and hearts to reclaim the world to God; when we see missionaries of the Gospel of salvation, with apostolic zeal, penetrating the darkest corners and the most savage tribes of earth—translating the Bible into every language, circulating tracts in every dwelling, and preaching the Gospel in the very temples of heathenism, thus planting the banner of the cross upon the strongest bulwarks of Satan's crumbling empire;—when we see hundreds of thousands of the children of idolaters, gathered into Christian schools and trained up in Christian faith and morals,—the Pagan systems of all Asia visibly tottering—the idols of all the islands of the sea rapidly following the vanquished gods of Tahiti, Rarotonga and Hawaii, how can we doubt that the prediction of the text is soon to be fulfilled—that "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the

top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it."

Disciples of Jesus!—Are you suitably awake to the privileges and responsibilities of the age in which you live? These considerations should encourage you and inspire you with unwearied zeal. The whole world is soon to be reclaimed to God; and he has assigned to you an allotted part in this great achievement. He expects your fervent prayers, your self-denying toil, your energetic, never-tiring perseverance. Are you aroused and at your work, fulfilling your vows, concentrating the intensity of your emotions, the stability of your principles and the energies of a holy life to the salvation of the perishing? Never were Christians so highly favored as now, never so encouraged as now. Followers of Christ! How many of the friends you love may now be won to Jesus by fidelity,—how many ruined by worldliness and neglect! Soon you will stand at God's bar. Your friends and the present world will meet you there. Will they bless you, or condemn you? Will they bear witness to your consistent piety, or to your inconsistent life? Will they testify to your faithful and heartfelt exertions to lead them to the Saviour, or will they attest, that, with a worldly, a frivolous and a careless spirit, you left them to perish unwarned? Fix your eye on death and the judgment, and live in view of those awful realities.

But there are many who yet reject the Saviour. You are living in practical infidelity; saying, by your conduct, to the world around you, that the commands of the Saviour you will not obey, that the warnings of the Gospel you will not heed. Is there no appeal that can reach your

heart? Is there no motive in heaven's joy to allure you,—none in hell's horrors to repel you from sin? Has death, with its pallid cheek and palsied tongue, no voice that you can hear? Has the dark grave, where you soon must sleep, no influence to move you? Is there nothing worthy of a thought in the awful thunders of the resurrection trumpet, at whose peal your mouldering body shall start again into eternal life? And can your ear be dead, and your heart be insensible, to the decisions of that judgment day, which will place you forever an angel in heaven, or a fiend in hell? O! my hearers, these are awful, awful realities. The world is awakening to them; breaking Satan's chains; thronging to Christ. The young, the old, the heathen even, are crowding to the mountain of the Lord's house. And will you, can you, my friends, slight mercy's offers, squander probation's hours, brave judgment's terrors, and go down into a grave of stubborn rebellion and hopeless despair? Will you again this day say to your pleading Saviour, "Depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways?" Will you still encounter the hazard of an unprepared death, of being cut down at a stroke by the divine displeasure?

You have but a few days more to decide whether you will join the triumphant cause of your Redeemer, or share in the terrible defeat of Satan and his legions. O! friends, hastening to death and judgment, harden not your hearts against these truths; disappoint not the hopes of angels; destroy not yourselves. Now seek and obtain an interest in that free salvation, which shall cheer your heart while you live and when you die, and which shall introduce you to that celestial world where there is no sorrow and no night.

§ 4. Rev. David Peabody.

In less than six months after Mr. Abbott had closed his labors with the Calvinist Church, the Rev. David Peabody was installed as his successor. The public services with which he was introduced to this sphere of labor were:

Introductory prayer, by Rev. David Perry of Hollis, N. H.; Sermon, by Rev. Thomas H. Skinner, D. D. of Andover; Prayer of installation, by Rev. John Nelson of Leicester; Charge, by Rev. Osgood Herrick of Millbury; Fellowship of the churches, by Rev. Wm. P. Paine of Holden; Address to the people, by Rev. John Wilde of Grafton; Closing prayer, by Rev. Elijah Paine of West Boylston.

With serious interruptions from ill health, Mr. Peabody's pastoral relation to this church continued until the autumn of 1838. Few pastors were ever more highly esteemed by their people; in few instances was the relation between a minister and his church ever more agreeable and harmonious than this. In the course of this ministry, a considerable number of members of the church asked dismission, with a view to be formed, with others, into the Union Church. The request was granted, not without regret indeed, but with entire cordiality. "As their object appears to be the building up of the kingdom of Christ, and extending the means of grace in this place, they do cordially consent to grant their request, and do hereby accompany their consent with an expression of their Christian sympathies."*

When Mr. Peabody's request† for dismission was laid

* Records of Cal. Chh. p. 122.

† On account of ill health.

before the church for their action, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, That this church entertains a high sense of the value of the ministerial labors of the Rev. Mr. Peabody, and of his faithful discharge of all the duties resulting from his connection with us, and that we do most sincerely regret the occurrence of an event which seems likely, for a season at least, to deprive the church of Christ of his services as a pastor.

"Resolved, That we do most cordially sympathize with the Rev. Mr. Peabody and his companion in this visitation of divine providence, and most earnestly pray that his health may be restored, and that he may be useful and happy in the situation in which he has been called to labor."

Resolutions equally cordial and sympathetic were passed by the society; and the ecclesiastical council that sanctioned his dismission, warmly responded to these testimonials of esteem and affection.

The author has great pleasure in appending the following synopsis of the principal events in Mr. Peabody's life. It is from the pen of one who knew him most intimately, because sustaining to him the dearest and most intimate of earthly relations.

"Rev. David Peabody, the youngest son of John and Lydia Peabody, was born at Topsfield, Essex Co., Mass., April 16, 1805. Constitutionally feeble, he was never able efficiently to labor at the occupation of farming, although he was employed more or less upon his father's farm till the age of fifteen.

"In accordance with the opinions once held, that if a man was too feeble for manual labor, he would be sufficiently

strong for a life of study, his father yielded to his importunate desire for a collegiate education, and in the spring of 1821 he commenced the study of Latin, at Dummer Academy, in Byfield. Though from a child the subject of religious impressions, and naturally serious, I find no record of deep conviction of sin, till the summer of 1821; and although he appears to have regarded himself at times a subject of renewing grace, he did not cherish that abiding confidence in his regenerate state which led to a public profession of his faith, till three years later. In 1824, he united with the Congregational Church in Topsfield. In the autumn of 1824, he entered Dartmouth College, at Hanover, N. H.

"During his collegiate course he taught winter schools as a means of defraying college expenses, pursuing his college studies at the same time, to maintain his standing in his class. This overtasking of himself increased his natural feebleness, and with neglect of regular and vigorous exercise, prepared the way for all his subsequent ill health and protracted sufferings. He was graduated Aug. 20, 1828, and from an order of exercises at that Commencement, I find his name designated for the Valedictory Oration. After a few weeks spent in recruiting his health at his father's, he went to Portsmouth, N. H., and for a short time was assistant editor of the N. H. Observer.

"Before the close of 1828, Mr. Peabody entered the Theological School at Andover, Mass. In the spring of 1829, he was invited to take charge of a select school for young ladies in Portsmouth, N. H. He accepted, and taught there till the autumn of 1830, when his declining health induced him to seek a southern residence. He

went to Prince Edward's Co., Va., secured a situation as teacher in the family of a physician, Dr. Morton, and entered the Theological Seminary near, of which Rev. Dr. Rice was the founder and principal instructor. He remained in the family of Dr. Morton till he had completed the course of study required, when he was licensed by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Va.; and, after receiving license, preached in Scotsville during six months. Preferring to labor in New England, he declined an invitation from the church in Scotsville to settle there, and returned, improved in health, to Mass. in 1832. In Nov., of this year, he was ordained as pastor of the First Church in Lynn, Mass. Though subject to frequent illness, he was able to perform his pastoral and ministerial duties during the greater portion of his residence in Lynn, with little interruption. In Sept., 1834, he married Maria, daughter of Lincoln and Lucy Brigham, then residents of Cambridge, but formerly of Southborough, Worcester Co., Mass. Jan., 1835, he was attacked with a severe hemorrhage, which greatly reduced his strength and kept him in a state of debility during much of the winter. The influence of east winds proving increasingly injurious to him, he reluctantly decided to ask a dismission from his church and people, and when sufficiently restored to preach, to seek a field of labor remote from the sea-coast.

"In the spring of 1835, he was dismissed and spent the months of May and June in traveling for the benefit of his health, at the same time acting as an agent of the Mass. Sabbath School Society. Having received a call from the Calvinist Church in Worcester, and being in a good measure restored to health, he accepted the call, and July 15th,

1835, was installed as pastor of that church. The change of climate proved highly beneficial, and for a season he cherished strong hopes of confirmed health; but in the winter of 1835–6, a severe hemorrhage again prostrated him for a season, and destroyed his hope of continued usefulness as a minister. During the spring of 1836 his health improved and he resumed his labors and continued them through the summer. In September his health again declined. A slight hemorrhage, followed by an irritating cough and increasing debility, induced him with the advice of physicians, to rest for a season, and test the effects of a sea voyage and a winter in the South. With the consent of his people he decided to follow their advice; and in Nov. 1836, sailed from Boston in the Elizabeth Bruce, Capt. P. L. Rogers, for New Orleans. During his passage out his health was comfortable, and he was able on two Sabbaths to preach one sermon each day. On arriving at New Orleans he decided on going to St. Francisville—a village on the Mississippi 170 miles above New Orleans. Here he remained during the winter, preaching as his health allowed to the white and colored population. Change of climate and freedom from parochial labors contributed to the improvement of his health; and, in May, 1837, he returned to Worcester and resumed his labors. Through this year his health was variable, but he was generally able to discharge his parochial duties, and continued to preach till the spring of 1838, when he found himself suffering from pain in the chest and lungs, and general debility. His Sabbath labors became increasingly exhausting, and his state of health such, that he felt compelled to take a season of rest. In company with a friend he journeyed through a part of

Vermont and New Hampshire. On reaching Hanover the day after Commencement he learned to his surprise, that he had been appointed Professor of Rhetoric in Dartmouth College. Conscious of his inability to labor longer with comfort to himself and benefit to others, as a preacher, and in hope that his health might be adequate to the lighter labors of a Professorship, he regarded it his duty to accept the appointment. He was accordingly dismissed from his relation to the Calvinist Church, and with a deep sense of the many kindnesses he had received and the great indulgence shown him during his often interrupted and imperfectly performed labors among that people, he entered upon the duties of his Professorship Oct. 1838.

"The change of labor proved highly beneficial; and during the winter of 1838–9 he enjoyed a degree of health he had not known for many previous years; and in March, so confident did he feel of final restoration, that he remarked 'he thought God would indulge the cherished wish of his heart and permit him again to labor as a minister.' But an attack of pleurisy in April, followed by lung fever, so prostrated him as to destroy these hopes; and though he so far recovered as to attend to college duties, till the September following, it was in much weakness. His disease was daily and consciously bringing him rapidly to the close of life. During the last weeks he lived, he had relinquished all hopes of restoration; and in the midst of his days (for he died at the age of 34 years and six months) Oct. 17, 1839, he submissively and tranquilly yielded up the cherished hopes and plans of future years, and entered, as we confidently believe, upon the 'the rest which remaineth for the people of God.'

"Mr. Peabody during the years of our married life was habitually an early riser. It was his custom to retire punctually at ten o'clock, and if in comfortable health, he rose between 4 and 5 A. M., devoting three early hours strictly to devotional purposes. He was very systematic in the arrangement of his studies, and adhered closely to his plans. It was his daily practice to devote some time to the reading of the Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek. He commenced his preparations for the pulpit early in the week, and labored with great diligence through the forenoon, giving his afternoons to pastoral visits, and resuming his studies again at evening. Most of his sermons were prepared *two in a week*, and he re-wrote but few. He regretted the necessity of this practice, but exposure to bad weather, change of diet, and the like, during exchanges, were often so injurious to his health, as to deprive him of the advantages by relief from labor, which others of his profession thus realized. He was therefore from necessity, led to adopt a course, which he regarded as very unfavorable to his improvement in sermonizing. From conversations with him I know that he aimed, as his first object, 'to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God,' and feeling that his time for labor was emphatically short, he did not so much attempt *extended* plans of usefulness, as direct results."

The character of Mr. Peabody was a rare combination of strength and loveliness. It was no ordinary mind which moved that form so graceful in its outline, looked through that countenance so manly in its beauty, and uttered itself in that voice so mellow in its tones and rich in its modulations. It was no formal or coldly calculating spirit that

imparted such cordiality to the grasp of his hand, gave such sincerity to his inquiries for your welfare, and prompted a friendship at once warm and enduring. His was a true charity, beginning at home and going out on every line of human sympathy to the widest circumference of human interest. With intellectual powers of a high order, he had a susceptible and genial temperament which fitted him to animate and adorn social life. His mind expanded by study and enriched with the treasures of knowledge, he brought his cultivated faculties and varied attainments and laid them as a willing sacrifice on the altar of truth and holiness. Interesting as he was in other relations, it was as a devoted, single-hearted Christian that he appeared most lovely and winning. It is due to his memory, and it will be instructive to the reader to dwell for a moment on the distinctively Christian character of the Rev. David Peabody.

The following extract from his private journal will give some idea of his early religious impressions. "The faithful instructions of my parents were never wholly lost upon me. I cannot remember the time, when I did not occasionally, if not regularly, pray, and if I grew weary in the employment, the little adage in my primer, 'Praying will make you leave off sinning, and sinning will make you leave off praying,' would inspire me with fresh hope, and I resolved to persevere. Often would I lie in the morning after my brothers had risen, that I might have an opportunity of offering up my simple devotions, and rarely did I close my eyes at night without repeating the Lord's prayer, or some brief petition of my own. My parents used to tell me, that if I would be good, I should be a minister; and

very early the chief burden of my petition was, that God would prepare me to be a preacher."

While at Dummer Academy, more than usual religious interest prevailed. His own experience at that time is thus recorded: "My own religious feelings were deepened, and my mind was permanently impressed by a sermon on the return of the prodigal son. I saw, that like the prodigal, I too was a wanderer from my heavenly Father; and after a week or two spent in a state of great solicitude and alarm, the ample provisions of the Gospel opened more clearly and fully to my view. Christ appeared all-sufficient for my pardon, and I humbly committed myself to Him, resolved by His grace to consecrate my mortal and immortal all to the service of my God and Redeemer. A calm and holy light seemed let in upon my soul, and filled me with a sweet and joyous tranquillity."

In his whole subsequent life he appears to have been actuated by a deep and fixed religious principle. Admonished by the presence of feeble health of the precariousness of life, his habitual aim was to 'walk with God' on earth and dwell with God in heaven. His motto seemed to be, "*For to me to live is Christ.*" His physical sufferings, instead of eliciting complaint or exciting impatience, wrought 'patience, experience and hope,' and increased sympathy and fellowship between him and his Saviour. Side by side with the record of days and nights of illness, is the evidence of holy submission to the divine will and of earnest prayer that whatever of life should be given him, might all be spent for the honor of the Giver. When friends dissuaded him from attempting too much for his feeble powers, his reply was, "I have but little time to serve my master on earth; what I

have to do must be done quickly." When great physical exhaustion seemed to bring death unusually near to him, he wrote, "I have to-day meditated much on death and eternity. The idea of death, though awful, is not distressing. I could wish to live, and employ, for a few years, the poor talents God has given me, in endeavoring to promote the religion of his Son, and to save the souls of men. The office of a Christian minister, so long looked forward to, is so dear, that now, standing on the threshold, I am reluctant to be torn from it. But thy will, O God, be done." During all the years of his active ministry, the early hours of the day must be given to God in the exercises of secret devotion. On entering upon the duties of his Professorship, he did not lay aside his habits of devotion or give any less prominence to the motive of honoring his Redeemer. Those who knew him best remember what concern he manifested for the spiritual welfare of the students, and how earnest were his prayers for their conversion. When convinced that his work on earth was very nearly completed, he writes, "So my hopes are disappointed; God grant that my heavenly hope may never be."

One who was well qualified to judge, thus sums up the excellences of his character. "What his private papers show him to have felt in the presence of God, was made evident also in his social and official intercourse. Intelligent, grave, dignified; conscientious in all his relations, from the student upwards to the teacher, the pastor, the professor; nothing empty as a scholar, nothing unsettled or inconsistent as a divine, nothing vague or groundless as an instructor; sincere, generous, honorable, devout; keenly sensitive in respect to the proprieties and charities of life; warm

in his affections, strong in his attachments, stern in his integrity; above the arts of policy, the jealousies of competition, the subserviency of party spirit, and simply instant upon serving God, in his own house, and in all his official ministrations, he was one of the few who are qualified to be models for the young, ornaments to general society, and pillars in the church of God."*

It is truly gratifying to have so fine an illustration of the Worcester Pulpit, as is furnished by the subject of this biographical sketch. In his official capacity as a Christian minister, Mr. Peabody 'studied to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' His disciplined mind made diligent preparation for the pulpit; his devotional feelings imbued the products of his intellect with the life and power of religious emotion. His first aim was to 'commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.' The treasures of learning, the force of logic, the adornments of style and the graces of a finished elocution, were of little worth unless subsidary to this end. Many of his sermons were elaborated on a sick bed, and some of them were committed to paper by the aid of an amanuensis. Unable to procure much relief by means of an exchange of pulpits, he was accustomed to prepare two sermons in a week, and rarely re-wrote a discourse. Obviously, therefore, his sermons cannot fully show all that he might have done, had he possessed physical vigor sufficient to realize his own conception of what a sermon should be. Still, his discourses contain much valuable thought, skillfully arranged, and forcibly expressed. They will

* President Lord's Sermon at the funeral of Mr. Peabody, p. 13.

be read now with interest and profit; when delivered by himself, they were precious and admirable to the disciple of Jesus and instructive to all who heard them. His manner in the pulpit was characterized by solemnity and impressiveness. A sincere and earnest spirit breathed through the whole of it, and imparted to it unusual power. You could not have listened to him habitually without the conviction that he came from his closet to the pulpit, and went from the pulpit to his closet. He 'preached not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and himself the servant of the church for Jesus' sake.' Interesting to the more intelligent of his congregation, he had the rare faculty of presenting truth so that the unlettered could easily apprehend and feel the force of what he said. He would not, in accommodation to the unlearned, descend so low as to disgust the cultivated; nor, to please the refined, would he rise where a plain common sense could not follow him. The evidence of this is, that the humblest Christians now speak with deep feeling of his touching and profitable discourses, while those who can appreciate an elegant style and graceful manner accord to him high praise for his power in the pulpit.

No single sermon of Mr. Peabody, could do any thing like justice to a mind and heart like his; but the one which follows will give the reader an idea of his style of thought and utterance on a theme of surpassing interest. It was preached in Worcester, in Park st. church, and in Marietta, Ohio. What adds a peculiar charm to this discourse, is the fact that the traits of character so beautifully described in it, were so delightfully realized in its writer's personal experience and so remarkably exhibited in his own life.

It remains to be stated, that Mr. Peabody wrote several excellent books for the young which were published by the Sabbath School Society, and that he contributed a number of able and scholarly articles for the religious periodicals of the day. The one published in the second volume of the American Quarterly Observer, on the 'Present State of Ethical Science,' would not suffer in comparison with the contributions of our best essayists. Nor is this remarkable; it was his way to elaborate sound thoughts after classic models.

MATURITY FOR HEAVEN:

A SERMON,

DELIVERED TO THE

CALVINIST CHURCH IN WORCESTER,

September 18, 1836,

BY THE

REV. DAVID PEABODY.

SERMON.

2 Timothy 4: 6—8.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

This world affords no sublimer scene than the triumph of the dying believer. Placed at the point where meet the extremes of time and eternity—probation and retribution, trial and reward—passing through the crisis which is to decide his destiny beyond the possibility of change, he beholds with steady gaze the wonders of opening heavens, and while conscious that his hold on earth is fast giving way, he yields himself up without fear into the hands of his Maker. The dark valley where death maintains his remorseless dominion, loses its horrors as he descends, and becomes more luminous to his view than the brightest noon-day of life. Faith is fast changing to vision, and the shadows of sin are vanishing away like vapors before the rising sun.

Heroes on the field of battle, amid the tumult of a rout

or the acclamations of victory, have died with undaunted courage. Philosophers, pillowing their heads on the delusions of science falsely so called, have met death with cheerfulness and mirth. But the hero's courage is only a brutish hardihood or an insensibility produced by exciting scenes which disqualify the mind for serious reflection, and the philosopher's is only a forced submissiveness, a compulsory welcoming of an evil which cannot be avoided. Not so the joyful resignation of the dying saint. His is an intelligent, willing, cordial submission. He calmly surveys the ground on which he stands, and sees it sinking beneath him. His eye is full upon the visions of the great future, and he finds himself borne forward into the midst of them with a resistless hand. Yet he neither recoils nor trembles. The everlasting arms are underneath him, and the awful change through which he is passing is but a birth into glory.

Few have anticipated death with greater eagerness of desire, and finally met it with greater joy, than that laborious servant of God, the apostle to the Gentiles. Imprisoned at Rome, shut out from all his accustomed opportunities of usefulness, and expecting nothing in the world but continued oppression and distress, he turned for relief to the glory that was to be revealed—to the inheritance reserved for him in heaven. "I am now ready to be offered," says he, "and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." Happy

apostle! However dreary was thy imprisonment, it was irradiated with the reflected splendor of eternal day. Heavy and galling might be the chain that ground upon thy weary limbs, yet thy spirit, free as if furnished with an angel's wings, ranged transported through immortality!

The toil-worn and wasted man, who in labors, perils and sufferings for Christ's sake, perhaps exceeded all other men, and who had long since desired with strong aspirations to depart and be with his Master, was well matured for heaven. He sought a release from a world of trials not only because its trials were too burdensome to be borne, but because he was prepared for a world of reward. Weary of his protracted and unremitted labors, he sought rest; tired of wandering in a world of strangers, he sought his home above. Yet more than this—his heart, finding nothing below commensurate with its desires, yearned for a nearer and fuller enjoyment of the appropriate objects of its love. To depart and be with Christ, to dwell with Him whom he adored, to behold his glory refulgent from the throne, and surrender his whole being to the rapturous joy which his presence must inspire—this it was that awakened his soul to its eager and intense aspirations.

Meetness and maturity for heaven is a subject of deep interest to every serious mind, and especially to the mind of every Christian. Willing or unwilling, we must soon close our eyes on all we love below, and bid farewell to the world which was only meant to witness the commencement of an immortal existence. Prepared or unprepared, we must soon be ushered into another state of being, changeless, endless, infinite in joy or wo. An unseen hand is hurrying us along with a resistless power; and whether we

yield with meek submission, or struggle with reluctance, onward still we are borne towards the end of our worldly course. We are on the rapid current that sweeps all mortal things away; and every fleeting hour marks our swift progress to eternity. We shall soon reach the awful period, when the spirit must be rent away from its perishable companion, and wing its flight to other worlds. While we are waiting, and meditating, and trembling, in anticipation of the event, we are hastening on to meet it with fearful rapidity. And when we have reached it, no power can reverse the decree, nor avert the stroke. Death at the appointed hour will strike, and the strong must bow, and the youthful fade, and all flesh perish like a vapor.

Who, then, as he looks forward to the hour, will say that it matters not, whether, when he stands on the brink of eternity, he shall slumber in philosophic apathy, or tremble in shuddering hopelessness; *or*, like the apostle, triumph over death, and exclaim, "I am ready to be offered"; "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness"; "O Death, where is thy sting: O grave, where is thy victory"! What thoughtless worldling but will say, Give me the apostle's faith and confidence, and glorious hope; let my possessions be scattered to the winds, but deny me not, O deny me not, a treasure in the skies! What giddy youth but will say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my *last* end be like his!"

What are the characteristic marks of maturity for heaven? What are some of the more obvious elements of character which indicate a meetness for the final rest of saints?—I look around over this assembly, and fain would I select one among you all, who may serve as a model, while

I proceed with the delineation. Is there not some one among you who have these many years been sitting at the feet of Christ, and seeking to transcribe upon your own the excellences of his character,—some one, whom I may place before the eyes of all, and say—Behold a saint ripe for heaven? Would to God there were those who might thus be pointed out as living examples, witnesses for God, epistles known and read of all men!

One who is ripe for heaven, has learned the poverty and emptiness of the world. He has been effectually taught, and the conviction lies deep in his heart, that all things which belong to the world are unsubstantial and unsatisfying. The objects which he once pursued with eagerness, he is now ready to tread in the dust. They have lost their charms. His soul turns from them with feelings almost of disgust, as the *man* turns from the toys of childhood. The enjoyments which once delighted him, are now tasteless and vain. In imagination he may wander over the world, but like the dove from the ark he finds no resting-place. His spiritual being finds nothing in all created things, which can meet its wants. Were this created universe all, his spirit would famish and die. He does not droop, he is not unhappy, his soul feeds on hidden manna, his eye rests on unseen glories; and none of all the sons of worldly pleasure can boast of joys like his.

Hence he disengages himself more and more from the cares and perplexities of business, or submits to their incumbrance only that he may gain the means of glorifying God. He may toil as industriously as any votary of mammon, but it is, directly or indirectly, to lay up treasure in heaven. He knows that in thousands of gold and silver

there is nothing that can minister to his enjoyment, but as the means of purchasing good.

While others seek delight in friendship, in amusements, in the bustle of trade, or in the giddy whirl of pleasure, he is ready to inscribe *vanity of vanities* on them all. He stands amazed that men, *immortal men*, *men formed to be blessed in the enjoyment of God*, can so lose themselves, all swallowed up in these poor, miserable illusions.

Again. He has learned to submit, in almost unruffled composure, to the ever-recurring ills and trials of life. Afflictions come upon him heavily; and yet he receives them as the plant receives the showers of heaven, that weigh down its head, yet nourish it at the root. He is meek and patient in endurance; for his heavenly Father measures out every cup of sorrow: and shall he not drink it without repining? If he had set his affections on things below, then might he be disturbed when these were rent away. If his eye were formed only to receive the light which this world affords, then might he be in darkness when the clouds of trouble gather over him. But other objects attract his heart, other luminaries irradiate his soul,—objects which no misfortunes can remove, luminaries which no cloud can obscure.

He is smitten of God. An old age of poverty is coming on; and he has no resource. No resource? He scorns the thought. His God possesses all things; and all things are his in reversion. "All things are his; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come —all are his, and he is Christ's, and Christ's is God's." He is left alone in the world. The companions of his

youth, the objects of his fondest love, are now in the dust. He walks over their silent graves, and in solitary musing holds communion with the dead. There they lie, each in his narrow house, and he is left a lonely wanderer on the earth. He remembers the hours when they blest him with their society, and the endearments of their love. They rise before him again in the bloom and loveliness of life. He hears their well known voices, and loses himself for a moment in the sweet reminiscences of the past. But he awakes from the dream; and he is still alone. His heart is pierced with a momentary pang. Why, he exclaims, why am I not laid beside them, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest"! It is a transient emotion. God still lives. The spirits of the dead still live. His tears are dry. His heart is at rest. He rejoices to linger on a little longer, till the time of his appointed change shall come.

And what if he is doomed to suffer under disease and pain? See him on the bed of languishment. Does he murmur even in his agonies? Does he lift up his complaining voice against God, even when all his waves and billows roll over him? He almost welcomes the keenest pangs of distress; and though every nerve may be racked with torture till the cold drops fall from his distorted face, still he possesses his soul in patience, and meekly submits himself unto God.

Again. The saint mature for heaven, is peculiarly sensitive to sin. Once it was the greater and more obvious forms of transgression that filled him with anguish and covered him with shame. Now, having long since put off all these, it is the secret sins of the heart that most disturb

his peace. He cannot bear the least taint of guilt upon his conscience. As the faintest breath obscures the polished mirror, and mars the reflected image, so the lightest touch of sin upon his soul distorts the divine image that is reflected there, and destroys all the sweet harmony of his joy. Pride, anger, envy, ingratitude, impure imaginations, unholy desires—these, and not overt acts of sin, now form the chief occasion of his remorse. Against these he maintains the severest warfare, and strives to gain a complete and final victory.

Again. The great mysteries of the Gospel are now peculiarly precious. He delights in meditations on the sublime themes which inspired the seraphic spirits of David, and Isaiah, and Paul. Once he found his element in the more active duties of religion. He was then ill at ease, unless his energies were expanded in busy exertions. These he still loves to perform. His is not an indolent faith. The Christian faith never was, and never can be a sluggish, inoperative principle. But the mature believer, while to the extent of his strength he still labors actively for God, finds his chief enjoyment in holy contemplation. His mind dwells on high, and expatiates in the boundless fields of truth, illumined with the light of revelation. He glories in those doctrines which exalt God, and abase the sinner in the dust. A sovereign God, accomplishing all his pleasure, and governing the universe according to his will, brings all things to subserve the purposes of his love, giving up his own Son to die, sending forth his Spirit to move on the hard hearts of men, constraining whom he will to submit to his authority, and keeping them by his own power through faith unto salvation—these are the great mysteries

on which he delights to dwell. Again, he delights to hold communication with his God and Saviour. The perfections of God, as illustrated in the Redemption by atoning blood, beam on him, like clusters of suns in the broad firmament of truth. True holy light pervades, and cheers, and gladdens his soul. Hence he can appreciate the language of the Psalm; "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." "How sweet are thy words unto my taste; yea sweeter than honey to my mouth." "Thy testimonies are wonderful." "The entrance of thy words giveth light." "I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil."

Through the medium of the divine word, his mind dwells much on glorious visions of eternity. He passes on beyond the dark valley of death, and ranges in imagination through the regions of immortal day. The prospects of immortality stretch through brightest perspective before him, and his eye turns instinctively from the dull scenes of earth to feast itself on objects more congenial and transporting in the world to come. They become daily more real to his apprehension. He has no longer to labor with difficult exertion to bring them into distinctness to his sight. They no longer, as they once did, elude his view, and mock his perception. Clear and glorious, the most magnificent workmanship of God—they appear as present and palpable realities. He sees already the streets of gold, the pinnacles of light, the crowns of glory prepared for the redeemed. Towards these scenes his whole being tends, with almost impatient longings; and it is his heart's most fervent desire, when God shall bid him go, to join the general

assembly of the church of the first born, and unite in the song of Moses and the Lamb.

It is obvious, that the state of maturity which I have attempted to delineate, is in fact a state of meetness for heaven. It contains in itself many of the constituent elements of the heavenly state. The spirit and the frame of mind described are the same which will exist in heaven and constitute the basis of heavenly joy. The vision of God, a proper estimate of worldly things, delight in holiness, which in one relation is identical with sensitiveness to sin, love of the doctrines of eternal truth, which present the divine perfections to the mind, and an enjoyment by anticipation of what is more fully to be revealed in eternity—these differ nothing from the very elements of character which will be more conspicuous among the just made perfect. In proportion as they predominate, the law of nature, which is in the members, loses its power, and the soul is sanctified and made meet for the inheritance of saints in light. And it needs only a little change in the circumstances of our existence, it needs only the casting off of its casements of clay, so that the soul unimpeded may hold commerce with the spiritual world, in order to introduce it at once into heaven. I do not doubt indeed that there is a locality intended in the scriptural representations of heaven, a place fitted up and furnished for the residence of the righteous, mansions prepared for all who love the Lord. Yet a spirit having the image of God and the love of God, would behold his glory wherever in the universe it might be lodged; and wherever the glory of God is beheld and enjoyed, there in a general, though not in the highest sense, is heaven.

You perceive then, I remark again, brethren, what it is to become prepared for heaven. It is to cultivate that spirit, to establish yourselves in that frame of mind, which have been presented in this imperfect delineation. It is not the effect simply of some mysterious operation of divine power upon the soul, which gives it a new form, or faculties, or tendencies. The power of the Holy Spirit is requisite, it is true; for it is the office of the Holy Spirit to sanctify through the truth. But every child of God, while God works within him, must work out his own salvation. The work, my brethren, is yours. Is it begun? May I not ask, and doubtingly ask of some of you, Is it begun? Are these attributes of character in any measure apparent in your lives? Be not deceived. God will not be mocked. Is that work begun? Is it progressive? Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, do you discover in yourselves a change into the same image from glory to glory? Let these inquiries lead you to a careful examination. A crown of righteousness is before you. So run that ye may obtain. Cast off every weight of the sin that most easily besets you; and "run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus."

Lastly. It is an unavoidable inference from this subject, that multitudes, and many of you, my hearers, have no preparation for heaven, and unless you set about obtaining it, must fail of it forever. Soon it will be said, "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still." Your consciences have already given the verdict against you. They testify that you have none of those traits of character which are indispensable prërequisites to admission to a world of purity and

joy. You know that you do not possess the characteristics of one mature and meet for heaven.

And are you willing to be shut out from heaven? Are you willing, after a life of probation through the mercy of God, to lose eternal joys through your ungrateful neglect? Look forward into eternity, contemplate the awful scenes before you; weigh the infinite alternative at issue, and decide for yourselves as the dictates of wisdom and the voice of God demand.

The church left vacant by the transfer of Mr. Peabody to Hanover, with great unanimity, invited the

§ 5. Rev. Seth Sweetser

To become their pastor and teacher. He yielded to their request, and was installed over them on the 19th of Dec., 1838. The public exercises of the occasion were performed as follows. The Rev. E. Smalley of the Union Church in Worcester, led in the introductory services; Rev. J. S. C. Abbott of Roxbury, preached the sermon; Rev. John Nelson of Leicester, offered the installing prayer; Rev. Josiah Clark of Rutland, gave the charge; Rev. William M. Rogers of Boston, presented the right hand of fellowship; Rev. George Allen of Shrewsbury, addressed the people; and Rev. Rodney A. Miller of the First Church in Worcester, made the concluding prayer.

Mr. Sweetser is a native of Newburyport, and a graduate of Harvard University, in the class of 1827. Having taught school for a season in the State of New York, he

was appointed tutor in his Alma Mater, and officiated in that capacity from 1829 to 1831. He pursued the study of theology in the Seminary at Andover. In 1834 he went to Gardiner, Me. He labored with the feeble church in that place two years as a missionary. November 23, 1836, he was ordained as pastor of that church, and sustained that relation to them till November 8, 1838. In the December following, he entered upon his labors in Worcester. His ministry here of more than twelve years has been both laborious and pleasant, vigilant and successful. So long and acceptable a service has accumulated an influence which prophesies good for a long time to come.

CHAPTER VI.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND ITS MINISTERS.

§ 1. *The Church Formed.*

THERE was no Methodist church or society in Worcester until 1834. A few individuals of this denomination met for worship the year preceding and formed a "Class." On the 8th day of February, 1834, pursuant to a warrant issued by Emory Washburn, Esq., thirteen individuals met in the Town Hall, and were organized "as a Methodist Episcopal Religious Society in the town of Worcester." At the next session of the "New England Conference," they applied for a preacher to be stationed among them. Their application was successful. Worcester was entered on the "Conference Minutes" of that year as a "Mission," and a minister designated to serve them in the Gospel. During the first three years of their existence, the Town Hall served them as a house of worship.

The church at its organization, consisted of seven members. Their first year was one of great prosperity. At its close, one hundred and nine members were reported in place of seven at its beginning. When they removed from the Town Hall to their new house of worship, they numbered one hundred and fifty-three members. In the early part of 1837, that house* was completed and dedicated to

* It was built on the corner of Exchange and Union Streets, at an expense of $4150. The sermon at its dedication was preached by the Rev. Joseph Holdich, D. D. The house was destroyed by fire, Feb. 19, 1844.

the worship of Almighty God. Before the year closed, the church enjoyed a season of special religious interest, and one hundred and seventy-four persons were added to the church. In 1844, their house of worship was destroyed by fire, and they were obliged to return to the place where they first commenced public services as a religious society. The year following, the formation of a new church was contemplated, and in the Spring of 1845, a portion of the old church was set off and organized into the "Laurel Street Methodist Episcopal Church." About this time, the society erected on Park Street a neat and convenient temple* for the worship of God, which they now occupy, and which is respectably filled on the Sabbath. In the autumn and winter of 1849–50, the church was again revived with the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, and about seventy individuals expressed the belief that they had commenced a new life. Forty of these have united with the church. The whole number of members is now not far from two hundred.

The church and society appear to have been prospered from the first; and, notwithstanding temporary embarrassments, are still prosecuting the ends of their organization. Generally united among themselves, they have been favored in those who, from time to time, have been appointed by the "Conference" to minister to their spiritual wants. The genius of the Methodist economy seems to require that no church shall long enjoy the labors of the same pastor. Doubtless this rotation in the pastoral office has its advan-

* This house was commenced in Oct., 1844, and dedicated Aug. 16, 1845. Bishop Janes preached the sermon. It is 72 feet long and 50 feet wide. It has 72 pews on the main floor, and a Lecture Room below, which will accommodate about 400 worshipers. It cost rather more than $10,000.

tages, though many believe that its disadvantages preponderate. Be that as it may, the church here have reason for congratulation that the ministers who have been set apart for their especial service, were men of respectable talents, amiable and gentlemanly deportment, and of much moral worth.

With this view of the church and society, we turn to the Pulpit. There was a time, and that time dates not very far back, when human learning was not deemed a very essential requisite in the pulpit of a Methodist Church. That time has passed away. Great efforts have been made within a few of the past years, to correct the false estimate of education in the ministry which was once prevalent, and create not only a toleration of, but an earnest demand for ministers whose minds are cultivated by study and enriched with the treasures of knowledge. Those efforts have been followed with gratifying success. The writer believes that, at no time since the formation of the Methodist Church here, has ignorance been a recommendation to a pastor, or a minister less esteemed because he was known to make thorough preparation for the pulpit by previous study. The result is what might beforehand have been anticipated. The church has more intelligent piety, and greater spiritual strength. The first minister who began to labor here in this connection, was the

§ 2. Rev. Joseph A. Merrill.

He commenced his labors in 1833, as a traveling agent of the 'Conference.' Under his ministry a "Class"

was formed, and the way prepared for the formation of a church in the following year.

Mr. Merrill was born in Newbury, Mass., November 22d, 1785. He commenced preaching in 1805, in Lower Canada. In 1807 he united with the New England Conference, and received his first appointment in Salisbury, Mass. His labors were blessed in Scituate, Harwich, Wellfleet and Falmouth. In 1813–14, he was stationed in Boston with the Rev. George Pickering. Leaving Boston, he was for four years presiding elder of the Vermont District. In 1819, he rode, chiefly on horseback, five thousand miles, preached three hundred sermons, and received for his services and traveling expenses, $229! After spending two years at New Market, he was appointed presiding elder on the New London District. There his labors were greatly blessed, and he was also brought to test the value of his religion by a sickness which taught him to feel that there was but 'a step between him and the grave.' In 1826, he was again in Boston, rejoicing that his services were attended with visible tokens of the divine approbation. Similar tokens awaited him on his removal thence to Lynn Wood End. A single instance deserves record. 'After hearing him preach, a middle aged man, long an inebriate and an almost hopeless case, deeply affected by the truth, though then intoxicated, pressed his way to the altar, confessed his vice with a sorrowful heart, and, promising to reform, became thenceforth a sober, praying, useful citizen.' The following three years, Mr. Merrill was presiding elder of the Providence District. After his services in Worcester, in 1833, he was presiding elder of the Springfield District, then he preached in Web-

ster, then in Williamsburg, then in Lowell, then in Newton Upper Falls, then in Salem, and then in East Boston. In 1846, he was at East Cambridge, in 1848 at Newburyport, and in the spring of 1849, at the Springfield Conference, he "superannuated." During his last sickness his mind was calm and clear. 'Death,' he said in triumph, 'is a conquered enemy; he has no power over, or sting to me.' His death, peaceful as an infant's slumber, took place July 22, 1849.

One who knew him well has recorded the following tribute to his memory. "He is gone, and his death will not fail to arrest the attention of thousands within the New England Methodist Church. He has long been prominent among his brethren, and has borne a conspicuous part in many of the noble enterpises of the church of God. He was no mean man; but a man of thought, possessing a mind and body of large activity, and which it appears, remained with him even down to the sickness that, after long struggling, overcame him at last. Marked by some peculiarities, he was, however, a good man. Deeply in his heart he loved Christ and his cause, and was one of the men who, with a firm step, would have gone to the stake for the sake of Christ. His views were enlightened, noble, generous. He was one of the pioneers in the cause of education in the church and ministry with which he was associated, and his ardent and active spirit readily sympathized with every rational enterprise looking toward the elevation and influence of the church of Christ. We shall see him no more at present. That clear and manly voice, heard so many years along the hills and vales of New England, has died away; and when the annual assembly shall

gather again, and the fathers thereof shall be counted up, one of them will be absent."

§ 3. Rev. George Pickering.

After the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Worcester, Mr. Pickering was appointed by the Conference as their first pastor. He remained here only one year; but his ministry was the means of enlarging and strengthening the church in an unusual degree. Many speak of him now with peculiar interest and some of his pithy sayings are still repeated.

Mr. Pickering was born in Talbot County, Md., in the year 1769. He became hopefully pious when eighteen years of age, and commenced preaching. He came to New England in 1792, and was appointed to Hartford circuit. He then preached in Tolland, Lynn, Boston and Needham. For several years he was presiding elder on Boston District. It is not necessary to follow him from place to place through the course of his long life. He was indefatigable in his labors, and was spared to continue them until near the close of 1846. The following sketch of his character is extracted from the 'Minutes of the New England Annual Conference,' held in Lynn, April 28, 1847.

"George Pickering was a man of marked character and would have distinguished himself in any age. His person was tall, slight and erect; with a serene, though earnest expression of countenance—walking with a steady and elastic step. In his personal habits he was remarkably precise and methodical, and his manners were dignified and

courteous. He was kind-hearted, affable, and highly cheerful. His distinguishing traits of mind were penetration, clearness, decision; a tenacious memory, an inventive genius; a prompt, yet cautious judgment; prudence, a peculiar quaintness,* or humor, and an elevated taste. He was spiritually-minded in an eminent degree; his faith was unwavering. He was deeply impressed and pervaded with the truths of revelation, which were his constant study. A spirit of prayer, in a strong, bright flame, burnt upon the altar of his heart, and his sense of heavenly things often flowed with rapture, causing him at times, while preaching vehemently, to shout 'Glory to God.' He was a popular preacher, a sound divine, a cheerful and self-sacrificing itinerant, an able and patient ruler, and what is of the greatest importance, he was successful in winning souls to Christ. He was a living pillar in the church of God, and saw it, by his labors and those of his coadjutors, rising to importance, and making to itself an eminent position in the history of the age. He closed his eyes in death, at his family residence in Waltham, Mass., December 8th, 1846, at the age of seventy-seven; having held his office in the traveling connection for upwards of half a century; and being at the time of his death, the oldest effective traveling preacher on the globe. His prospect was glorious. 'My affairs,' said he, 'for time and eternity, are all settled.'

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* Some specimens of this trait in Mr. Pickering's character, are still repeated in Worcester. "I shall preach on —— evening on *spiritual arithmetic.*"

"Some young converts are like calves just let loose from the stall; they jump and run, prance and kick at a great rate; and it soon becomes necessary to crib them again."

His illustration from "one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor" will not soon be forgotten.

And the last word which his weeping family caught from his failing lips, was Glory! Glory!"

§ 4. Rev. John T. Burrill.

Mr. Pickering having completed his term of service in Worcester, Mr. Burrill, by appointment of Conference, succeeded him. He ministered to this church with great acceptance, two years; and the people would gladly have retained him still longer. They petitioned that he might remain with them another year; but their petition was denied. So earnest were they to carry this point, that it was with difficulty they could be persuaded to abide by the rules of 'Methodist Itineracy.' He was 'an interesting and popular preacher, an excellent pastor, and very much beloved by the people.' Nor was his popularity confined to his own society. Christians of other denominations highly esteemed him for his talents, and were delighted with his preaching.

§ 5. Rev. James Porter.

Mr. Porter came to Worcester in 1837, and remained here one year. His labors seem to have been greatly blessed. One hundred and seventy-four individuals were added to the church in that single year. Mr. Porter was afterwards presiding elder in this District. He is now stationed over the Methodist Episcopal church in East Boston. Having finished his labors in Worcester, he was succeeded by the

§ 6. Rev. Jotham Horton.

The new incumbent was devoted to the interests of the church, and diligently performed the duties belonging to his station. His labors here terminated at the expiration of one year. He was esteemed as a sound and forcible preacher, and much respected for the sobriety of his deportment and general excellence of character. Soon after leaving Worcester, he dissolved his connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and united with the 'True Wesleyans.' He is now laboring in the vicinity of Boston.

§ 7. Rev. Moses L. Scudder

Was Mr. Horton's successor. Mr. Scudder was a man of very active mind and pursued his labors here with great ardor. 'The people now remember him with pleasure as an amiable, active Christian man, a good pastor, and an interesting preacher.' He continued here two years. Could he have remained longer, his people would have been gratified. He has preached in several other places, and always very much to the acceptance of his people. He is now a member of the 'New York East Conference,' and stationed in Middletown, Ct. He was followed in Worcester by the

§ 8. Rev. Minor Raymond.

Mr. Raymond began his labors here in 1841, and closed them in 1843. He greatly endeared himself to his peo-

ple, and made friends also beyond the limits of his own society. Having enjoyed superior advantages for intellectual cultivation, his sermons were carefully thought out and conveyed much valuable instruction. The church often speak of him now with emotion, and his remembrance is fondly cherished. As he was thought to have superior qualifications for teaching, he was transferred from the 'Itineracy' to the Wesleyan Academy at Wilbraham, Mass. As principal of that institution he has already acquired a high reputation, and is still devoting himself with energy and good will to its interests.

§ 9. Rev. Charles K. True, D. D.,

Succeeded Mr. Raymond in the pastoral supervision of this church. Mr. True is a graduate of Harvard University; and, in 1849, was honored by his Alma Mater with the degree of Doctor in Divinity. His services in Worcester were highly appreciated by the more intelligent of his hearers, and he was held in estimation by all who formed his acquaintance. With less of the exciting than some others in his preaching, he had perhaps more of the instructive. While he was not deficient in those qualities which are requisite to rouse the thoughtless, he was better adapted to the service of instructing those already thoughtful and 'building up Christians in their most holy faith.' During his ministry here, the society was deprived of its house of worship, by fire. His term of service closed with the year. He is now Prof. of Polite Literature in the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Ct. He was followed in the pastoral care of this church by the

§ 10. Rev. Amos Binney.

The ministry of Mr. Binney was of two years' continuance, and very acceptable to his people. These were years of peculiar interest to the church. A part of their number was set off to form a new body, under the name of the Laurel Street Methodist Episcopal Church. A new house of worship was erected, more spacious and convenient than their former one, and also more eligibly situated. Mr. Binney having done good service to his temporary charge, left for other fields of labor, and is now presiding elder of Charlestown District. He was followed here by the

§ 11. Rev. Jonathan D. Bridge.

Mr. Bridge brought with him a reputation for more than ordinary effectiveness as a preacher, and for excellent qualities as a man and a Christian. He was much esteemed by his people and by others, and during the two years of his ministry was a useful pastor. He has left behind him pleasant recollections for the urbanity of his deportment and the general excellence of his ministrations. At the present time, he is pastor of the Methodist church worshiping in Church street, Boston. His immediate successor in Worcester, was the

§ 12. Rev. Loranus Crowell.

This incumbent, in the single year of his service here, made himself so acceptable and useful, that his unexpected

removal at the expiration of that period, was a great affliction to his church and society. Though comparatively silent and unobtrusive, he was yet making deep impressions on many minds and winning his way to many hearts. Mr. Crowell was graduated at the Wesleyan University in Middletown, in 1841. On leaving Worcester, he was transferred to Boston, and is now pastor of the Bromfield street church in that city.

§ 13. Rev. Nelson E. Cobleigh

Was Mr. Crowell's immediate successor, and he still continues here as pastor of the Park street Church. He was graduated at the University in Middletown with the class of 1843, joined the New England Conference in 1844, and since that time has been a traveling preacher. Since his entrance upon this field of labor, his church has enjoyed a season of special religious interest, and more than forty individuals have been added to its numbers. Mr. Cobleigh has nearly completed his term of service here, and will be followed by another in April, before this account will pass under the eye of the reader.

It has not been deemed advisable to give an extended biographical account of each of these pastors, for the reason that no one of them remained here more than two years. Nor is it expedient that the number of sermons here published should equal the number of clergymen who have ministered to this church. Still, some illustration of the Methodist Pulpit in Worcester is desirable, and the author has applied to the present incumbent in office to furnish it. The following is his response to that application.

JESUS,

THE SAVIOUR OF HIS PEOPLE:

A

SERMON,

BY THE

REV. NELSON E. COBLEIGH.

SERMON.

MATTHEW 1 : 21.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus ; for he shall save his people from their sins.

The name Jesus, the true meaning of which is Saviour, happily expresses that interesting relation which, as God manifested in the flesh, He sustains to guilty sinners, a fallen world, and especially to his peculiar people. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus ;" and this is the reason of it— "He shall save his people from their sins."

In the Scriptures He is called "the Saviour of the world." "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." 1 John 4 : 14. Again, He is mentioned by the apostle Paul as the "Saviour of *all men*." "Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." 1 Tim. 4 : 10. In this last passage it is intimated that He is the Saviour of his people, or of them that believe, in a different sense from that in which He is the Saviour of all men. Let us inquire

I. In what sense Jesus is a *universal Saviour*—the Saviour of all men. That in some sense He is such a Saviour, we fully believe ; or He would not have been so called by

inspired men. The grand object of his incarnation was that He might be the Saviour of the world. For He himself declares that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3: 17.

For this, He took upon him the form of a servant; for this He was made under the law and became subject to the law; for this "He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich;" for this He toiled, gave instruction, wrought miracles, drank the cup of sorrow, endured insult, suffered pain, agonized in the garden, shed his precious blood, and died upon the cross. In doing this He made an atonement for sin, and suffered as the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

In view of what Jesus did and suffered among men, God can now be just—just to his law, just to his government, just to his creatures, just to Himself, and yet be the justifier of all them that believe in Jesus. He suffered and died for all men; made a universal atonement, the blessings of which should extend to every member of our fallen race; so that "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." He by the grace of God "hath tasted death for every man." According to some of the figures of prophecy, He hath opened the prison doors to all them that are bound, and sent in to the unhappy captives a generous invitation for all to come forth from their cells, enjoy the precious light, breathe the pure air, and exult in the glorious freedom of the Gospel. He has prepared a sumptuous feast for all people, and spread before the starving multitudes a table in the wilder-

ness; freely inviting the hungry and the perishing to come, and eat, and live. In Judah and Jerusalem He has opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness—a great moral Bethesda, into whose moving waters not only the first, but every one that steppeth, is made perfectly whole; and to this all-cleansing fountain He cordially invites the morally leprous and impure to draw nigh, wash, and be clean.

These glorious and costly provisions He has made free for all, and to the enjoyment of these precious blessings he entreats all to come, even the most unworthy, and the greatest sinners. He has opened the way and made it possible for all to enter it, walk therein, and be saved; made it possible for all who fell in Adam to rise in Christ, for all who have wandered however remotely from God, by personal sin and transgression, to be brought savingly nigh unto Him through the atoning blood of Christ. Having opened the way, and graciously invited all, He has authorized his ministers everywhere to proclaim that He is able and willing to save, even to the uttermost all that will come unto God by Him. Therefore without hesitation we preach Christ as a universal Saviour, who suffered, and bled, and died, and intercedes for *all men.* In like manner, with the same spirit, we also proclaim through Christ a free, full, impartial and universal salvation *provided* for all men.

But this by no means proves that all men will be saved. There may be cities of refuge; but people are not safe till they enter within their walls. There was once an ark; but thousands of the unbelieving who would not enter it, perished in the flood. It is one thing to have a Saviour offered, and quite another thing, depending wholly upon the will of the individual, to accept of Him as such. It is

one thing to have salvation provided, and a very different thing, depending again wholly upon the voluntary choice of the person, to seek that salvation, and embrace it on the proffered conditions. It is not enough that the prison doors are set open, that a general amnesty has been proclaimed, and that an invitation has been given for all, on complying with a certain specified condition, to be free; he only has freedom who complies with the terms, rises at the call, shakes the manacles from his limbs, and actually goes forth from the dungeon and the cell. The mere fact that a feast has been prepared, that a table has been spread with luxuries enough and free for all, will not save a soul from the inevitable pains and horrors of starvation, unless he in season draw nigh and partake of its provisions. The universal law is, "Thou shalt *eat* or die." The fact that cooling springs are in the desert, will not save the fainting traveler; he must approach them and *drink*, or perish. So the fact that Jesus died for all men, is able and willing to save to the uttermost, and graciously offers to deliver from their sins, without money and without price, all that will come unto God by Him, will not save a sinner from the love and practice of sin in this world, nor from its awful consequences in the world to come. He only is saved, he alone can be saved, who believes in Christ with a heart unto righteousness, who, seeing no other way of escape from the curse of a violated law, under the drawings of the Father, voluntarily comes to Christ, and finds pardon, regeneration and adoption.

Jesus is the Saviour of the world, in this sense: He was given by the Father for the world; He tasted death for every man; God laid upon Him the iniquity of us all; He is

abundantly able to save; and, without respect to persons, He freely invites all men to come and find in Him salvation from their sins. While He is such a Saviour, He is the only Saviour of the world. "There is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we must be saved." His blood alone can atone for sin and wash away our guilt. He is the Saviour provided for the world and graciously offered to all men. He is therefore the world's offered Saviour.

We now proceed to inquire

II. In what sense Jesus is the Saviour *of his people*. His people are all those of Jewish or Gentile race, who believe on, and who obey Him. Such only will be saved. For the same authority that calls Him the Saviour of all men, in the most positive and unqualified manner declares that believers only shall be saved. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him."

To his people Jesus is not only a provided and an offered Saviour; He is a Saviour accepted and embraced. He is freely offered on his part, and cheerfully received on their part. "He came unto his own and his own received him not; but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." His people are not all those who have heard his inviting voice, calling unto them and saying, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give

you rest;" but those only who, having heard the gracious invitation, unlike the unbelieving, have come out from their hiding places in the desert, in the prison, and in the wilderness, and coming even unto Him, have consecrated themselves to his service. They have chosen Him to be their personal Saviour, and He has elected them to be his peculiar people, zealous of good works; making their free choice of him, the ground of their election to everlasting life. To the world He is a Saviour, because He stands ready to save whenever they come to Him; to his people He is a Saviour, because inasmuch as they have already come, He *does now save them.*

Here it may be well to inquire a little into the nature of that salvation which the disciples of Christ may enjoy in this life. In many of its circumstances it differs much from the salvation which they will enjoy with Him in a future state; but in some of its essential features, it is precisely the same. It is not the privilege of Christ's people to be saved from being tempted and tried in this world; but it is their privilege to be kept from yielding to temptation and from sinking under trials. They may not hope to be saved from physical sufferings and providential afflictions in their probationary state; but they may expect to be greatly strengthened while suffering the one, and divinely comforted while enduring the other.

Salvation in the scripture sense, means deliverance, or freedom from sin. This is the sense in which the people of God may be saved in this life. They are not to be saved from *all the effects* of sin. By past transgressions they may have greatly abused and enfeebled their intellectual and moral powers, the consequences of which may follow them

all through life, and for aught we know into eternity. This is the sense in which they may be saved. They may *now* be delivered from the *guilt* and *condemnation* of all their *past sins*, and may be ever henceforth *kept* by the power of God from falling again into the commission of sin. To some, this may at first appear to be strong doctrine, stronger than the teachings of Scripture will warrant. But let us calmly, candidly and thoroughly examine it, before we pronounce the sentence of anathema against it. Let the plain statements of Scripture be our guide and authority in the investigation. The language of Jesus to his followers is, "*Abide in me.*" Would he command or exhort us to abide in Him, if it were not possible; nay more, if it were not our duty and privilege to do so? I trust that men will be slow to charge upon God's merciful and immaculate Son, so full of love and tender compassion, such folly and injustice, as would be involved in an effort to sustain the affirmative of this question. "Whosoever abideth in him *sinneth not.*" 1 John 3: 6. If then it be possible to "abide in Christ," if it be practicable to obey Him, if his commandments are not grievous, if indeed his yoke is easy and his burden light, then is it possible for believers to live without sin. It is just as possible, just as easy, just as much the Christian's duty and privilege, to be saved from, and live without committing sin, as it is to obey Christ and abide in Him. But we have more proof on this point. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8: 1 and 9. If they only who have the spirit of Christ are his people, and they who walk after

the Spirit have now no condemnation, being in Christ Jesus; then surely are they saved already from their sins. For they, being freed from condemnation, must be freed from the guilt of sin; for this it is that bringeth condemnation. The absence of the effect must be attributed to the removal of the cause. Here are other passages, however, that settle the question by as plain, positive and direct statements as any reasonable mind can desire. "Whosoever is born of God *doth not commit sin.*" 1 John 3: 8. "We know that whosoever is born of God *doth not commit sin;* but he that he is begotten of God *keepeth himself*, and the wicked one *toucheth him not.*" 1 John 5: 18. Such is the nature of the salvation which is set forth in the Scriptures—deliverance from the guilt of all past sin, and power to keep from falling again into the commission of sin.

Of this salvation Jesus is the author. The Scriptures assert that "He is able to save even to the uttermost all that come unto him." We take this to mean not only that He is able to save *all* that come—the worst and greatest of sinners, but also able to save them *wholly*, from the guilt and power of *every sin*. Men sin because of some power, operating upon their hearts and passions, which draws them away from virtue into the practices of sin. Jesus is able to break off from his people the power of sin; so that sin shall not have dominion over them. With his sharp two-edged sword He can cut that more than magic spell asunder, and thereby give deliverance to them that have been long bound and led captive by the devil at his will. By the power of the Holy Ghost He can *kill* and make *alive*, make his people "dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto

God." He can render them so dead unto sin, that all the power of enticement which the world and Satan can bring to bear upon them, will be as ineffectual to seduce them from virtue and the ways of love, as the same would be to raise a dead body from the grave to life. Through the agency of the Spirit He can so reveal to the hearts of believing men the hidden glories of the spirit world, and so unfold to the eyes of the inner man the transcendent beauty of holiness, as to make them outgrow in a single hour, all relish for the sinful pleasures of life, as a person outgrows the love for toys with which he played and prattled in childhood.

Wherever sin, by its polluting touch, has left the leprous spot upon the soul, effacing therefrom the divine image, *there* Jesus has blood which He knows well how to apply, to the cleansing away of all moral defilement, so that the image of God shall be again stamped upon that soul. "His blood cleanseth from all unrighteousness." He can shed abroad and keep ever active in the heart, such a degree of love, as will cast out all fear, fulfill the whole law, and so imbue the springs of thought, desire and purpose, that every impulse to action, and every motive shall be holy. Thus filled with love to God and love to man, ever desiring, always intending, and in each act seeking the glory of God, his people are saved from their sins, lead holy lives and walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Such a salvation, and such a life, Jesus is able to vouchsafe unto his people.

This power is in Jesus, not in the people, only as it flows to them by divine communication. It is power, not natural, but supernatural; ability, not innate, but gracious. The

sinner cannot save himself. Of his own, he has no power to resist temptation; none to abstain from sin. The unhappy victim of sin, he is completely in the power of the devil, controlled and led captive by him at his will.

A vine was so planted, that as it shot up from the soil, it gradually ascended the adjacent tree, and spread itself out among the branches of the oak. At length, by sudden violence, it was torn from the supporting tree. Cast upon the ground, it creeps along in the dust, and winds its lengthening tendrils around every weed, shrub and little object which it may chance to meet. In its fallen state it has no power to disengage itself from the many objects which it has embraced, and to which instinctively it clings; much less has it power to rear again its prostrate head among the towering branches of the oak. But the skillful gardener can unwind its thousand coils, remove every object from its grasp, raise the drooping vine and train it again to climb the stately tree. Like that fallen vine without a gardener, is the sinner without Christ. Made to love his Maker, his affections by the treacherous power of sin have been torn away from God, and cast down prostrate and bleeding to the perishing things of earth. Here, creeping as upon the ground, they fasten upon many an object forbidden to our embrace and unworthy of our love. Instead of the things that are above and eternal, they grasp gold and silver, houses and lands, honor and fame, pleasures and friends, together with many other things which perish with their using. From these too fondly loved objects, the sinner cannot tear his heart away and transfer his affections back to God, any more than the prostrate vine by its own power, can disengage itself, and rise to blossom and bear

fruit among the waving branches of the oak. But Jesus can do it. With a skillful and tender hand, He can unwind the coiling tendrils of the heart from objects unworthy of their embrace, gather up the bleeding affections, heal and purify them, and set them strongly on things above. While the sinner is all weakness, Jesus is all strength; and we are willing that the natural impotency of man should be set in striking contrast with the all-sufficient power of Christ, so that despairing to save themselves, sinners may lose no time in coming to Christ who is strong and mighty to save.

If Jesus is able thus to save his people, it inevitably follows that it is the privilege of all believers to be saved from all their sins. If, as must be admitted, Christ is stronger than his great adversary, the devil; and if the holiness of his character makes him hate sin with a perfect hatred; He is not only *able*, but must greatly *desire*, to save his people from their sins. If professing Christians are not thus saved, it must be for one or more of the following reasons: Either Christ is not able to save them; or being able is not willing; or being both able and willing, his people do not, as it is their privilege, put themselves into a position to be fully saved—do not wholly consecrate their hearts and lives to his service. This last, we believe, is the true cause of the unhappy failure. Some do not believe it to be their privilege, or even possible, to be saved from committing sin in this life; and consequently Christ cannot perform in them the mighty work of full salvation, because of their unbelief. Others, though believing it to be their privilege, are nevertheless kept from seeking it with all their heart, and for that reason kept from obtaining it,

through the fear of man, the love of the world, or the pride and vanity of life.

But who, I ask, that has felt any degree of the love of God in the heart, does not wish to avail himself of these great Gospel provisions? Who does not desire to obtain the blessings which have been purchased for him, by an infinite sacrifice, and at so great an expense? Who would expose himself longer to danger by continuing to walk in darkness, when he might more easily walk in safety, and enjoy the light of life? Who would prefer to carry his chains and wear the galling fetters of sin, when a friend stood near, who was ready at his entreaty to strike them off from his bleeding limbs?

Though to some minds, sin may bring a momentary pleasure, a transient, unnatural joy, it soon turns to pain and always ends in death. A sweet morsel under the tongue, it tends to bitterness, brings darkness upon the mind, and fills the soul with painful forebodings of retributions yet to come. When a better way has been opened, when the highway of holiness has been cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, who would prefer to make life's short journey in the rough, dark, thorny way of sin, rather than to walk in the pleasant pathway of the just, "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day?" "He that sinneth is of the devil"; and are we proud of our paternity, preferring to be children of the wicked one, rather than sons and daughters of the Lord? Sin exposes us to the greatest danger. Satan, whom he that sinneth serves, may be just ready to seize you more firmly, with intent to hurl you from probation, down to the infernal prison of despair. At least by every sin he is drawing his

victim, slowly it may be, but skillfully and surely, towards the awful brink of a deep and yawning hell. Do you not wish deliverance from such imminent peril? Would you not be freed from abiding condemnation? When you may be free, will you consent to live on, wearing the heavy yoke of bondage? O, who does not groan for deliverance? Whose heart does not now sigh for the purity of holy love; for the peace that passeth all understanding; for the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory; for the bright assurance of hope that is "as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, reaching to that within the vail"? Thanks be to God that such is the privilege of his people. Would the reader enjoy even in this life, this great, this full salvation? There is a condition to be fulfilled. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." There are also preliminary steps to be taken. Believing this to be your privilege, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

CHAPTER VII.

ROMAN CATHOLIC MINISTRY.

§ 1. *Establishment of Catholic Worship.*

Between the years of 1824 and 1828 inclusive, the Blackstone Canal uniting Worcester and Providence, was begun and completed. This work furnished employment for many Catholic emigrants. Some of these were gathered in Worcester and its vicinity. For their benefit religious exercises were occasionally held during the progress of the work. In 1834, the Rev. James Fitton began to visit the town once in a month. In the spring of that year, four families and about twenty unmarried persons, constituted the sum total of the Catholic population of Worcester. It is computed that the number now exceeds four thousand. The small house of worship which was erected on Temple street, in 1834, has been succeeded by 'St. John's Church,'—the largest structure of the kind in the city. It is 136 feet in length, and 65 feet in breadth, of Roman Doric style of architecture. The present pastor estimates the number of worshipers here, at six thousand, principally Irish and Canadians.

§ 2. *Ministers of the Catholic Church.*

The Rev. James Fitton was the first Catholic clergyman who ministered to this church in Worcester. He is a native of Boston, and pursued his early studies in that city until

1812. Then he visited Canada to acquire the languages and attend to other branches of education, under private tuition. The Right Rev. Bishop Fenwick was his theological instructor. In December, 1827, he was ordained, and appointed to official duty in the church of the Holy Cross. In 1828, he was pastor and teacher to the Indians of Maine. He was, in 1830, designated as pastor of Trinity Church in Hartford, Ct., and employed in that city, and on missionary circuits through the neighboring country for the distance of a hundred miles, till a church and resident minister were obtained in New Haven, and an assistant in Hartford. Soon after, his regular visits to Worcester began, and in May, 1836, he removed to this town. Mr. Fitton established two schools here, one for children in the 'basement' of the church, and the other for boys, in the higher branches of education, called Mount Saint James Seminary, on Pakachoag hill. This has been greatly enlarged, and is now known under the name of the 'College of the Holy Cross.'

The Rev. A. Williamson succeeded Mr. Fitton. He was from Baltimore, and a student of the Propaganda of Rome. Having accomplished his service here, he gave place to the

Rev. Matthew W. Gibson, who is the present incumbent in office. He took charge of "the Worcester Missions," in 1845. He is by birth an Englishman, and received his education partly in England, and partly in Rome, in the College of the Propaganda. In 1846,

Rev. J. A. Mc Avoy was appointed his assistant. A native of Ireland, he was educated in Trinity College, Dublin, and had the reputation of great learning. Ill

health prevented him from performing the labors expected of him here, and induced his resignation in 1847. He was succeeded by the

Rev. John Boyce. This gentleman by birth an Irishman, was educated in Maynooth College, Ireland. Previously to entering upon this field of labor, he ministered to the Catholics in Eastport, Maine. He is at present the assistant of Rev. Mr. Gibson.

It was intended to give some illustration of the Catholic pulpit in this work, but the author has not been able to obtain any.

CHAPTER VIII.

UNION CHURCH AND ITS PASTORS.

§ 1. *The Church Organized.*

In the autumn of 1834, the friends of evangelical religion began to entertain the idea of forming a third church of their order. In December of that year, it was resolved by individuals to take measures for the erection of a new house of worship, to accommodate the contemplated church when it should be organized. Meetings were held in December, 1835, preliminary to the formation of the church. At one of these it was voted "that the church to be organized be called the Union Church." In January, 1836, the articles of faith and covenant* were unanimously adopted by those who intended to join in the new enterprise. Agreeably to letters missive from persons duly authorized to issue them, an ecclesiastical council was convened February 3, 1836, to aid in the organization of the church. The council expressed satisfaction with the preliminary proceedings of those at whose instance they were convoked, and voted that the church be formed with the usual public solemnities. The account of these follows:

Introductory prayer, by the Rev. John Boardman of East Douglass: Sermon, by the Rev. Josiah Clark of Rutland; Constituting the Church, by Rev. Samuel Gay

* Appendix J.

of Hubbardston; Consecrating prayer, by Rev. J. S. C. Abbott of Roxbury; Right Hand of fellowship, by Rev. John Nelson of Leicester.

The original number that constituted the Union Church, was sixty-three. Twenty-seven of these were from the First Church, and nineteen from the Calvinist Church. The enterprise was begun and had been conducted with such a spirit, that the council, in expressing their fellowship, took occasion to utter the following sentiments: "And Brethren, we rejoice because your organization as a distinct church has resulted, not from any dissent from those with whom you were formerly associated, not from any alienation of feelings, not from any sectional or party interest, but from the deliberate conviction you have so fully expressed, that the cause of religion in this place will be promoted by the measure."

The Union Society, convoked by a warrant of Emory Washburn, Esq., held their first meeting, March 5, 1836. Their house* was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God, the 6th of July, 1836. Rev. John Nelson preached the sermon on the occasion; Rev. George Allen of Shrewsbury offered the dedicatory prayer.

Regularly organized, the church and society turned their attention to the establishment of the Gospel ministry among them. November 24, 1836, an ecclesiastical council was convened for the purpose of installing over this new Church their first pastor, the

* This house is of brick, 90 feet in length, and 54 in width. In 1845–6 its internal arrangement was altered, so that it now accommodates a larger audience than it could at first. It has ninety-eight pews on the floor, and twenty-four in the gallery, besides seats for the choir. The organ is one of Stevens' best.

§ 2. Rev. Jonathan E. Woodbridge.

The public services with which he was introduced to the ministerial office here, were; sermon, by Rev. Parsons Cooke; installing prayer, by Rev. Samuel Gay; charge, by Rev. John Nelson; right hand of fellowship, by Rev. J. D. Farnsworth; address to the people, by Rev. Josiah Clark.

Mr. Woodbridge had been previously settled over the church in Ware Village. When he had labored about one year in Worcester, a difference of opinion arose between him and a majority of his society, as to the expediency of opening the church edifice to anti-slavery lecturers. Believing that the action of the society was such as to diminish his influence, and impair his usefulness, on the 21st of January, 1838, he asked his dismission. A council having been convened to deliberate and act upon the matter, voted, that it is expedient to comply with the request of the pastor, that his relation to the Union Church be discontinued. He was accordingly dismissed, February 14, 1838, with the following testimonial:

"The council feel great pleasure in recommending Rev. Jonathan E. Woodbridge to the churches as a minister of highly respectable talents and learning, of sound doctrinal views, of amiable character and devoted piety,—a minister qualified by nature, by education and the grace of God, to be greatly useful in any field of labor to which divine providence may call him."

Since his retirement from Worcester, Mr. Woodbridge has been principally engaged in editorial labors in connection with the New England Puritan, now the Puritan Recorder. At the author's request, he has contributed a sermon for this work, which will increase its variety, and subserve its completeness. The subject of the discourse is one of surpassing interest, and its illustrations must be of practical value to all who suitably consider them.

AIDS TO HEAVENLY CONTEMPLATION:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN WORCESTER,

December, 1836,

BY THE

REV. JONATHAN E. WOODBRIDGE.

SERMON.

2 Peter 3 : 13.

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

How glorious the revelations made in the blessed volume of divine truth. This passage of Scripture certifies us, that new heavens and a new earth are to be produced, which shall be the abode of righteousness. It is according to his promise, whose promises are yea and amen. These new heavens and this new earth are to be so transcendently glorious, as to throw the mantle of utter oblivion over those that now exist:—"For behold," says God speaking by the mouth of the prophet, "I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall be no more remembered nor come into mind."

We have not selected this text for the purpose of describing or attempting to describe these new heavens and this new earth. They are above description. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive adequately what they are. Paul, though transported to the third heaven, gives us no particular description of what he saw, or heard. He tells us, indeed, that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard

unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

We are not, however, left altogether without light in this matter. There are, here and there, on the pages of inspiration a few brief allusions to the brightness and glory of the upper world. The most extended sketch is that found in the 21st and 22d chapters of Revelation. This is in a high degree rich and animated. The particular features of that holy empire probably could neither be conveyed to our minds, nor adequately understood by us, while in this state of imperfection and sin. We have the firmest conviction, that heaven is to be a place of surpassing loveliness; that it is to be the attractive capital of the boundless empire of Jehovah; that it is to be adorned with all the riches of the universe; and to be a glorious manifestation of infinite wisdom, goodness and power. The idea of it is associated in all intelligent minds with every thing pure, perfect, exalted and glorious. Into it there shall, in no wise, enter any thing that defileth; it is pervaded by the special presence of that Being, whose nature is perfection; there are written the general assembly and church of the first born; and therein dwelleth righteousness. It presents every thing to command admiration, to stimulate desire, and to produce effort. We should expect that, if man were wise, he would fix his gaze upon it with the eye of the eagle and soar towards it upon pinions that would never tire; that he should look for the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, more than they that watch for the morning; and that heavenly contemplation should be his morning aspiration, his meridian refuge and his consolation at even tide.

The importance of this subject can hardly be realized. Heavenly contemplation is the most rational employment that can engage the attention of men in this world. The man who knows how to practice it, has at his command the secret of happiness. It can transport the soul from the murky atmosphere of this world into the pure azure of heaven. It can give to the soul, though encumbered with the fetters of mortality, an antepast of the pleasures that are at the right hand of God. It puts man upon the proper exercise of his powers, and it feeds those powers with food adapted to their immortal nature.

As this subject is so important in its bearings, it should frequently occupy our attention. We now propose to consider some of the helps to heavenly contemplation.

Our *first* direction is, Seek the aid of the Holy Spirit. His influence is always necessary in the investigation of divine truth, and in the contemplation of heavenly themes. There is naturally no tendency in man to contemplate divine subjects. He has no relish for them. Left to himself, he would put them far away as he does the evil day. He is carnally-minded. "The flesh always lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, one to the other." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." God with his matchless perfections, heaven with its radiant glories, the soul with its unutterably solemn destinies—these have scarcely a place in all his thoughts. He thinks little, believes less and desires naught of that fullness of joy, which flows from the presence of the High and Holy One. Hence the need of the

Spirit's influences, to produce a taste for divine things, and to move the vail of unbelief from the mind, and thus let in upon it the light of eternity. None of us probably can conceive how essential is the agency of the Spirit. We cannot of ourselves think a right thought or perform a right action. All our moral ability is of God. This fact, however, does not excuse us from responsibility. Our inability is the result of a chosen and cherished perversion of the heart, and therefore criminal. This state of the heart will continue, and of course this inability, till divine agency remove it. But the divine agency, in moral changes, is usually exerted on the mind of man by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, therefore, is man's helper and man's hope. Without Him, heaven has no loveliness; the soul has no affinity for it, and the contemplation of it is wearisome and profitless. If then, my hearers, you would succeed in heavenly meditation, seek, *first*, the aid of the blessed Spirit.

Our *second* direction on this subject is, Study to attain correct and scriptural views of heaven. Think of it as a place of perfect holiness, where no vestige of sin is to be found; where the sordid gratifications of sense are unknown. It is no oriental paradise, addressing itself to the appetites of a depraved nature. The paradise of Mohammed and the heaven of Christ have no points of resemblance. Men are very prone, in thinking of heaven, to make it such a place, in their imaginations, as they would desire. The roving Indian, for instance, would wish that it might be composed of beautiful hunting grounds. Its chief attraction to the votary of Mammon would be that it abounded in gold and precious stones; and the bold transgressor

would demand that it should no where furnish the evidence of a God. But unsubstantial as a dream are all such expectations. The true heaven is one and unchangeable; it is full of God; it is a resplendent display of Deity; it is one vast reflector of Jehovah in his multiplied and adorable perfections.

The heaven of the Christian, as we have said, is a holy heaven; to dwell there requires a holy nature. The God of heaven is a holy God; to worship Him there, we must be holy as He is holy. The inhabitants of heaven are saints and holy angels; to mingle in their society and to join in their song, we must be able to cry, "holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." Holiness is the motto of heaven; it is the indispensable requisite for admission there; as without holiness no man shall see the Lord, whose special presence it is that constitutes heaven.

In order, then, to profitable meditation about heaven, we must be penetrated with the truth, that it is a holy world; that if we ourselves would rise and shine there, as the brightness of the firmament, we must be holy; that any and every idea of heaven that excludes holiness, or gives it a subordinate place, is radically false; that any and every expectation of happiness that does not rest upon this rock, is the baseless fabric of a vision. Every man, therefore, who esteems happiness preferable to misery, who would rise to heaven and not sink to hell, who would bask forever under the sunny smile of God, and not lie down under his burning frown, should labor and live and pray to be holy. He should make holiness the absorbing theme, the central point of all his heavenly meditations. Are we, my hearers, doing this? Have we a growing conformity to the univer-

sal character of heaven? It is high time that this question were satisfactorily settled by us all.

The *third* rule for heavenly contemplation, which we mention, is to meditate often upon the *employments* of that bright world. The scenes and the employments of heaven are widely different from those that engross the attention of men here. Were we to think of nothing but what is going on in this world, we should be poorly prepared for that eternal world to which we are hastening with such certain and rapid velocity. It is the dictate of wisdom frequently to transfer our thoughts from the turmoil and feverish excitement of this vain life, to the serene but transporting employments of heaven. *There*, we shall worship God with the most fervid devotion. No sin will mingle with our sacred exercises. *Here*, our Sabbath and sanctuary services are defiled with worldly thoughts, carnal desires and selfish affections. *There*, we shall have no world but heaven to think about; *there*, there will be no flesh whose appetites will clamor for gratification; there will be no selfish affections in any creature, for *God* will be *all*, and in *all*. *Here*, our Sabbath and sanctuary services, though they occupy but a mere fraction of our time, often become stale, dull and wearisome. *There*, our services will be always fresh and always interesting. They will be perpetual, and yet will never weary; for we shall enjoy one perpetual Sabbath, and find it always a season of holy rest. All the employments of heaven will be perfectly congruous to our nature and tastes. We shall not do one thing and desire another. Our hallelujahs will not begin and end upon the tongue. They will have their origin in the heart, and will be living strains in the song of the

redeemed, that pleases and honors God. Our obedience will not depend upon motives of interest or duty. It will emanate from an overflowing fountain of love. It will leap towards God as the mountain torrent bounds to the ocean. How sweet will it be to obey Him, who is the portion of our souls, and whose favor is our life. Such an employment will crown our existence with happiness.

The study of the divine character also will engage us with an interest, that never palls, and with an improvement, under which our souls shall expand and brighten, and glow in the image of God. The divine character is an exhaustless subject. The more that is known of it, the more august will it appear, and the more will seem yet remaining to be known; and the more it is studied by a devout mind, the more will it be loved. The sublime mysteries of redemption, into which the angels desire to look; the instructive unfoldings of God's universal providence, and the never to be comprehended perfections of his character, will open upon the eye of the soul a field of vision whose horizon shall become wider and wider, until finally, it is lost in the boundless dimensions of Deity. Such employments as these are suited to immortal minds. Meditate upon them, oh our souls, here, that hereafter they may not be closed up against us for ever.

A *fourth* help to heavenly contemplation is frequent communion with God in prayer, and in the study of his holy Word. This world is neither the native clime nor the native soil of a holy soul. The garden of Eden was once its indigenous abode. But now it is, everywhere on this earth, an exotic. It needs artificial cultivation, in order that it may come to maturity. Take a tropical plant, and

transfer it to a cold and foreign soil, and if, perchance, it live, it will exhibit nothing but a sickly and barren existence. That it may flourish, it must be nurtured with extra care, be defended from the frosts, and be subjected to hot-house cultivation. So it is with a holy soul in the uncongenial climate of this world. Left to itself it will languish and fade, and though it may not absolutely die, it will never bring any fruit to perfection. It needs the dews of heavenly grace; it needs the fostering cultivation of daily prayer; it needs the genial warmth and light of divine truth. Under these influences, perseveringly applied, the soul may be made even here to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Daily prayer, and the study of God's word are the life of a renewed soul so long as it inhabits this tabernacle of flesh. They form, as it were, the Jacob's ladder between heaven and earth, on which the angels of God ascend and descend in their ministrations to the soul. Neglect prayer and the reading of God's word, and the soul's spiritual communication with heaven is cut off; the streams of its life are dried up. It becomes like the heath in the desert, and seeth not when good cometh. The soul, that day by day will faithfully supply its exhausted energies at the throne of the heavenly grace, and feed its wasting fires at the altar of divine truth, is laying up in store for itself a good foundation against the time to come, that it may lay hold on eternal life. There is nothing that can lift a man to heaven like prayer; there is nothing within his power that can prepare him for heavenly contemplation like prayer; and there is nothing so rich in materials for this kind of contemplation, as the inspired word of God. Prayer

and the word, then, are eminently important as auxiliary to heavenly contemplation.

Fifthly; Another aid to profitable meditation on things heavenly and divine, is a deep and abiding persuasion of the vanity of this world. Earth and heaven are the only theatres of thought in which men's minds love to expatiate. Of these two, the earth monopolizes the minds of all those who have their treasure here. And when we look around upon the various classes of men, and witness the eagerness with which almost all pursue the phantoms of earth, we are tempted to conclude that there are almost none who think about God and heaven. Yet, there have ever been even in the worst days a precious few who have not bowed the knee to the golden image which the god of this world has set up.

Earth and heaven, we need not say, are widely different. If the thoughts and affections are placed upon the one, they will necessarily be much withdrawn from the other. There can be no difficulty in deciding upon which they ought to fasten. The precept is explicit, Lay up your treasure in heaven, that *so* your hearts may be there also. The attractions of the world, as they address themselves to the depraved appetites of our nature never fail, if unresisted, to seduce the heart and to captivate the will. The world is the strong man armed, that enters in and takes possession of the citadel of the natural heart, and he never yields nor forsakes it until a stronger than he overcome him and cast him out.

The love of the world is an absorbing and exclusive passion. It needs to be resisted with a purpose that never wavers, and with an energy that never falters. Yield to it to-day, and tomorrow it bears every thing away. Never,

perhaps, went there by a time since the great flood, when it appeared more insatiable in its demands, and more gigantic in its power than at the present moment. It has come in upon our land like a flood. It is bearing our population hither and thither upon its swelling tide, and swallowing up multitudes in its agitated waters. It is, my hearers, an evil, and a bitter thing to be enslaved by the world. This love of the world, which is so absorbing at the present day, is an omen of fearful import to the present, and to coming generations. Multitudes are pushing westward and southward, to make their fortunes in new countries. Those who stay at home are seeking to add field to field, and house to house, till there be no place left. In our cities the effort is to heap up gold and silver as the dust of the streets, and thousands are compassing sea and land everywhere to get gain.

This is the melancholy character of the present generation. It is a worldly generation. The master passion of 1836 is the passion for adventurous speculation—the making haste to be rich—the grasping after things which are seen and temporal, and the neglect of those which are unseen and eternal. After a few more years, how will the solemn truth strike like a death-knell upon the ears of those who have wasted their brief but precious probation in the eager chase of this vain world, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" In the light of eternity the world will appear to have been nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. Surely, says the Psalmist, every man walketh in a vain show; surely he is disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

This vanity of all earthly things ought to be written upon men's minds as with the pen of iron, and the point of a diamond. It ought to be graven upon the table of their heart. It ought to be one of the first lessons of childhood; it ought to meet us on the threshold of life; we ought to gather it from the fading summer flower, and from the sere and falling leaf of autumn. We ought to read it in the daily mortality of thousands, in the unsatisfying nature of all earthly good, in the utter wreck of the brightest human hopes, and in that common grave, where are entombed the enterprises of nearly six thousand years. Let the impression, that the fashion of this world is passing away, be deep and abiding in our minds, and we shall think less of what is here, and more of what is before us in the eternal world. Christians will walk more with God; their conversation will be more in heaven; they will think of that blessed world when they lie down, and when they rise up; they will meditate upon God in the night watches; and they will frequently inquire of their souls, Whom have we in heaven but God? and there is none upon the earth that we desire besides Him. His law again will be their meditation all the day. The more Christians are weaned from this world, the more devoutly and the more sweetly will they meditate upon God and heaven. When they come gladly to confess themselves to be but strangers and pilgrims here, they can bid earth roll nor feel its idle whirl.

And the more, my brethren, we can weaken the hold of sinners on this world, the better for them; and the more likely will they be to set their compass towards the Star of Bethlehem, and to cast their anchor on the Eternal Rock.

Sixthly; The only other means of promoting heavenly

contemplation which we propose now to consider, is a solemn sense of the shortness of time, the length of eternity and the preciousness of the soul. And who can fail to be solemn in view of these infinite truths? Who would not begin *at once* to think about heaven, when he knows that soon time with him will be no longer? Who would not desire to think *much* about heaven, when he knows that his eternity *may* be passed there, and if not, that it *must* be passed in hell? Who would not think *with joy* about heaven, when he knows that his soul can be happy only there; and that its redemption is precious and ceaseth forever?

My hearers, our time is short; it is ever on the wing. We can never say, "It is here;" but only say, "It is gone." Our life is a vapor, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away. We are like grass which groweth up in the morning, and in the evening is cut down and withereth. Were a warning voice from the other world, to come to any one of us, saying, Set thine house in order, for this year thou shalt die, should we not wake up to this subject? Then, methinks, we should feel it important to familiarize ourselves with the scenes, which were shortly to occupy the most intense interest of our souls. Then, it would seem, that those of us who are *looking* to heaven as our home, would at least *desire* to know something about it; and not be satisfied to go there, having nothing of the stature of men in Christ Jesus. Then it would seem we should not be willing to live any longer upon children's food, but we should demand strong meat that we might mount up towards heaven as on eagles' wings, that we might run our heavenly race and not

be weary, and that we might be prepared at last for an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord. Were we certain that less than one year would be allowed us to ripen for heaven, how diligent should we be in cultivating every Christian grace? How frequently would our thoughts surmount these lower skies, and converse hold with the Eternal God; how plainly would the whole current of our thoughts declare that we seek a country, even a heavenly.

But it is quite probable that less than one year will be allowed to some of us; and who they are, is known only to Him in whose hands our breath is, and whose are all our ways. Each one of us may with propriety inquire, Lord, is it I? And each of us ought to live as though he were the one. Each one, therefore, ought by heavenly contemplation to gird up the loins of his mind, and to have his lamp well filled and brightly burning with the oil of divine truth; for just before us all lies the *dark* valley of the shadow of death.

My hearers, the attitude of heavenly waiting is most proper for us all. "Blessed are those servants whom their Lord when he cometh shall find watching; And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants."

§ 3. Rev. E. Smalley.

The present pastor of the Union Church was invited to this place, June 11, 1838. He was installed in office on the 19th of the following September. On that occasion, the Rev. John Nelson offered the introductory prayer; the Rev. Warren Fay, D. D. preached the sermon; the Rev. Horatio Bardwell made the prayer of installation; the Rev. Jacob Ide, D. D. gave the charge to the pastor; the Rev. George Allen presented the right hand of fellowship; the Rev. Francis Horton addressed the people; and the Rev. Rodney A. Miller made the concluding prayer. The connection then formed continues to the present time.

Before his settlement here, Mr. S. was for nine years associate pastor with the Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, D. D., of Franklin. Respecting both these connections, he could in truth say many pleasant things; but he rather inclines to the opinion that here, as in many other instances, "silence is wisdom."

CHAPTER IX.

SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH WITH ITS PASTORS.

§ 1. *Formation of the Church.*

MEASURES had been taken for the organization of a second Baptist Society, as early as 1836. A plan had been matured, and partially carried into execution; but the burning of the house of the first society caused the abandonment of the enterprise at that time. On the 9th of November, 1841, the First Baptist Church held a meeting to discuss the propriety of forming a second church of their order. It was then voted, after a free expression of opinions, that "it is expedient to attempt to sustain a second Baptist interest in this town." At another meeting soon after held, five individuals became responsible for the support of a second Baptist meeting for a year. On the 23d of November, twenty-five persons formed themselves into a conference, in order to take all the preliminary steps necessary to the formation of a new church. They adopted a carefully considered Declaration of Faith and Covenant, harmonizing with those of all Calvinist Baptist churches.* Separate worship was held for the first time, on the 12th of December following. The Second Baptist Church was organized December 28, 1841. The Rev. John Jennings of Grafton, preached the sermon on that occasion; Rev. Abisha Samson offered the consecrating prayer; and Rev. Samuel B.

* Appendix K.

Swaim expressed the fellowship of the churches. The church was constituted with ninety-eight members, eighty-nine of whom were recommended from the First Baptist Church. All the circumstances connected with the beginning of this enterprise were favorable. The new church carried with them the confidence, sympathy and prayers of the old; they were harmonious among themselves; and they were sufficiently numerous, and had pecuniary strength enough to sustain the institutions of the Gospel without feeling it to be a heavy burden. About one hundred members were added to their number in a single year after their organization.

The church worshiped in the Town Hall until January, 1844. On the 4th of that month, the new house of worship which they had erected, was dedicated to the special service of Almighty God. The pastor preached on that occasion from the text, "Worship God;" and the Rev. Mr. Bronson of Fall River, offered the dedicatory prayer. The house is pleasantly situated, neat and commodious. In consequence of its location, the church voted just before entering it for worship, that thereafter they would be known as the "Pleasant Street Baptist Church." The first pastor of this church was the

§ 2. Rev. John Jennings.

He was invited to this position, December 13, 1841, while yet the church had only the form of a "Conference." Early in 1842, he entered upon his labors here, greatly encouraged by the unanimity with which he had been called, and the prospect of usefulness which was widening

before him. Under his ministry the church and congregation increased, and for nearly eight years he was the acceptable and respected pastor of the church. Circumstances then appeared to him to indicate the expediency of discontinuing his pastoral relation, and, on the 1st of January, 1850, he retired from the position which he had filled honorably to himself and usefully to others. He still resides in Worcester, and is now acting as an agent of the American Tract Society.

Mr. Jennings is a native of Danbury, Ct. He was graduated at the Newton Seminary in 1834. In September of that year, he was ordained pastor of the First Baptist Church in Beverly. January 10, 1836, he became pastor of the Baptist church in Grafton. He sustained that connection nearly six years. When he left that church, he brought with him to his new pastoral relation the following testimonial: "We trust also that many souls have been converted here through your instrumentality, and that your labors in Grafton have, under God, caused many rejoicings in heaven. And we also by this certify to those with whom in the providence of God you may be placed, our fellowship for, and attachment to you as a minister of the Gospel, and our hearty commendation of you as such to the churches generally."

§ 3. Rev. Charles K. Colver.

This gentleman was invited to become the successor of Mr. Jennings, March 15, 1850. On the 14th of the following month, he signified his acceptance of the invitation,

and entered upon his labors as the second pastor of the Pleasant St. Baptist Church. He still retains this relation. Mr. Colver pursued his collegiate studies at Brown University, and his theological studies at Newton. Before coming to Worcester, he was for some time pastor of the Baptist church in Watertown.

CHAPTER X.

UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY AND ITS MINISTERS.

THERE was no society in Worcester of this denomination, until 1841. Individuals were known to cherish the sentiments peculiar to Universalists, but they did not associate for separate worship until June 3d, of the year just named. For more than two years, they held religious services in Brinley Hall. In November, 1843, their new house of worship was opened, and since that period their numbers have increased, until at the present time their congregation is so numerous that they are immediately to enlarge their accommodations for worshipers. A church* was organized in connection with the society, November 21, 1843. It now contains about sixty members.

The Rev. S. P. Landers was the first minister of this society. He commenced his labors with them at the time of their organization, and continued his ministry here until March, 1844. He has since resided in West Cambridge. On the 7th of January, 1845, the vacant pulpit was filled by the

Rev. Albert Case. He labored here more than four years. On retiring from Worcester, he engaged in other business, and is not now preaching. His successor was the

Rev. O. H. Tillotson. Invited to this place in June, 1849, he was installed as pastor of the Universalist church on the 27th of that month, and still sustains that relation.

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* Appendix L.

Under his administration, the numbers of the society have increased, and regard themselves as highly favored in having him for their pastor and teacher.

Mr. Tillotson is a native of Orford, N. H. The son of a devotedly pious mother, he was dedicated to God in his infancy, and early taught the principles of the Christian religion. In his youth, after giving some attention to agricultural pursuits, he entered a printing office in Montpelier, Vt., and became an apprentice to the art of type-setting and book-making. On attaining his majority, he devoted some time to school-teaching, meanwhile pursuing his studies for the ministry. In his youth, he was greatly troubled with doubts respecting the divinity of the Scriptures. Laborious investigation brought him to the firm conviction that the Bible is the word of God, and man's rule of faith and practice. At the age of twenty-two he began to preach what he believed to be the true Gospel, and this he continues to do until the present time.

The following paragraphs from a sermon by Mr. Tillotson, will not only be interesting to those of his own denomination, but also give some idea of the style of thought and mode of address adopted in the Universalist pulpit of Worcester. The sermon has for its text the 100th Psalm. "*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord*," &c. The subject is "the worship of God." After speaking of the reasonableness of worshiping Jehovah, he suggests the importance of having both stated times and regular places for worship, and bespeaks reverence for the Sabbath, "one of the best institutions with which God has blessed us," and for the sacred temple. "Let it be dedicated to the worship of the Most High, and then never, *never* desecrated to any un-

holy purpose." He divides public worship into four principal parts—Reading the Scriptures, Singing, Prayer, and Preaching. Respecting the first of these, he thus gives utterance to his sentiments:

"This is not only a very appropriate, but also a very important part of divine service. Yet we fear that too many look upon it as a mere form — a useless ceremony, and think that worship has not commenced until they have gone through with this. But what can we do that will be more pleasing in the sight of God, than publicly and seriously read his Word, with a determination to understand and obey its teachings? The Bible comes to us from our heavenly Father. He speaks to us from its pages; and it is our duty to attend to its instruction. This book should be our guide in relation to both faith and practice. It is full of wisdom and important truth. It is written in a style of transcendent beauty and sublimity. It is adapted to the various capacities and conditions of men in the world. If we wish for expressions of piety and devotion, we find them in the Psalms of David, who exclaims, 'My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of my God.' If we need maxims of prudence and lessons of experience, we find them in the Proverbs of Solomon, who informs us that 'wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace.' If we wish for passages of unparalleled sublimity, we have them in the book of Job, in the Psalms, and in the writings of the Prophets, where we read of God, 'But the thunder of his power, who can understand? He toucheth the hills, and they smoke. He taketh up the isles as a very little thing.' If we would with joy draw water from the wells of salvation, we have only to

open the New Testament, and the fountain of life is full and fresh before us. Saith the great Teacher, 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.' 'Him that cometh to me shall never hunger, and whosoever believeth on me shall never thirst.'

"As the Scriptures are thus interesting, as they are the fountain of life, the gift of God to man, it is evident that we cannot serve our Maker more acceptably than by giving them a proper portion of our serious attention."

Mr. Tillotson's idea of the sphere and influence of the Pulpit is thus set forth. After saying that preaching is an essential part of religious services, he subjoins:

"The object of preaching is not so much to amuse, as to benefit the hearer. Hence, one great end of this branch of public services is, to impart instruction upon the subject of religion. And, as the Bible is our guide in faith and practice, the preacher should be familiar with its teachings, and be able to explain it to the edification of his hearers, and in such a manner as to cause them to advance in the ways of well-doing. But, the sphere of the pulpit should not be too narrow. It should be so widened as to embrace all subjects of a moral and religious nature, which may properly be discussed in public and on the Sabbath.

"The pulpit is not only designed to enlighten the mind, but also to warm the heart. Hence it should be doctrinal, in order to convince the hearer; and practical to move him to act for himself and others. We should first teach the doctrine of the fatherhood of God; and then say, 'As God is our Father, it is our duty to love and obey Him.' We

should establish the truth of the doctrine of the brotherhood of man, and then say, 'As all men are brethren, we must endeavor to do each other good, and not evil.' And it should be the aim of the preacher, not to spend overmuch time in dressing up his ideas, and measuring his periods, but to present them in natural language, which shall be chaste, energetic and convincing."

The following thoughts are suggested respecting the public praise of God.

"This is a very important part of public worship. So thought the Psalmist, when he said, 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. * * * * Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.'

"We have the same reasons for praising God which the Psalmist had. We believe that He is good, that 'He is good unto all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works.' We believe that his mercy is everlasting, that 'many waters cannot quench, nor floods drown it.' And we are confident that his truth endureth to all generations.

"That singing is an important part of public worship, you will at once admit. How much pure devotion there is in a good hymn, well sung. It appears to elevate the soul above the groveling things of time and sense, to that land where angels dwell.

"The importance of singing is also apparent from the fact that it is about impossible to hold a congregation together, for any great length of time, where this part of the services

is neglected. The early Christians often joined in songs of gladness, and so should we. Believing, as we do, that God is our Father and that He loves and blesses all, even those who hate and curse Him—that from Him 'cometh down every good gift, and every perfect gift,' there is the greatest reason why we should rejoice. Well may we 'enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.'"

Omitting, for want of room, the remarks on public prayer, we come to what Mr. Tillotson says of the utility of such worship as he has described.

"Such are some of the principal parts of public worship. And the true worship of God is not only delightful, but beneficial also to his children. We experience much real enjoyment while engaged in divine services. It is salutary and sweet for us to commune with our Maker in prayer. It is pleasant, it is captivating, to hymn praises to the Being who rules in love throughout the universe. And it is profitable for us to meditate upon the word of God, and treasure up the instruction which it affords.

"This world, so rich with blessings for the human family, nevertheless, often becomes to us a vale of tears. We are prostrated upon beds of sickness. Friends are called to part with friends, and death is the common lot of all. Consequently, it is necessary for us to engage in divine services, so as to strengthen our faith, make bright our hopes, and thus prepare ourselves for whatever may await us while on the uneven journey of life.

"Also, the true worship of God tends to make us better. Our love for Him will be increased, as we meditate upon his

goodness to us. And, as we associate together, and call upon our common Father to bless the human family, our love for each other will strengthen, and our love for even the entire race to which we belong. Thus will worship increase our charity, and fit us for the faithful discharge of the duties of life.

"But should the effect be different from this, should not our devotions make us better and happier, we may well suppose that they are in some way defective. They certainly will not be acceptable to our Maker. We can do nothing to increase his happiness. Our worship, therefore, is pleasing to Him, only so far as it is profitable to us.

"Let us, then, endeavor to worship God in an acceptable manner. Let us serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with singing. Let us enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Let us be thankful unto him and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

CHAPTER XI.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND MINISTRY.

§ 1. *Episcopal Worship Established.*

THOSE who had the direction of domestic missions connected with this church in Mass., entertained thoughts of establishing an Episcopal Society in Worcester some time previously to 1835. Nothing was done, however, towards effecting this, until near the close of that year. "The first regular services, according to the liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church, were performed by Rev. Thomas H. Vail, on the 13th of December."* At that time, only two families in the place were known to be particularly interested in Episcopal worship. Twelve were connected with the enterprise in September, 1836; and the number of communicants was about sixteen. A subscription of $6000 was raised in Worcester to erect a house of worship, but the execution of the work was delayed in consequence of not receiving anticipated aid from abroad. After a few months, public worship was suspended, and the hopes which had been entertained of establishing permanent worship in Worcester, were for the time disappointed.

Mr. Vail was born in Richmond, Va., and resided in that city till 1822. Thence he removed to Norwich, Ct. In 1835, he came to Worcester. His labors here were highly

* Lin. Hist. p. 221.

acceptable to the people who enjoyed his ministrations, and he is now spoken of with interest by those who then formed his acquaintance. He was graduated at Washington College, Hartford, in 1831, and ordained Deacon by Bishop Brownell, in New Canaan, Ct. in July, 1835.

In 1843, another effort was made for the establishment of a branch of the Episcopal Church in Worcester. Worship was commenced, and a Rev. gentleman employed to preach and administer the ordinances. Measures were adopted to build a church edifice; in 1847, it was completed and dedicated to the worship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The Right Rev. Bishop Eastburn performed the dedicatory service. From that time worship has been regularly held in the church, and the number of worshipers has gradually increased. The society is known by the name, 'All Saints Church.' The clergyman who aided them in this renewed attempt to establish an Episcopal Society here, and who did much to secure for them a church edifice, was the

§ 2. Rev. George T. Chapman, D. D.

He commenced his labors in this connection in 1844, and continued them during two years. At the expiration of that period, he closed his services here, and was subsequently chosen rector of St. Stephen's Church in Pittsfield.

George Thomas Chapman, son of Thomas and Charlotte [Carnzu] Chapman, was born at Pilton, upon the river Yeo, opposite Barnstaple, Devonshire, England, Sept. 21st, 1786. He came to this country in 1795, with his parents,

who finally settled at Greenfield, Mass. He went to Dartmouth College in 1800, and was graduated in the class of 1804. The law was his first profession, which he practiced at Bucksport, Maine, where he was married to Alice Buck. He was ordained a deacon in the Protestant Episcopal Church, August 2nd, 1816, at Providence, R. I., by the Right Rev. Bishop Griswold, and also, by the same bishop, a presbyter, January 6th, 1818, at Bristol, R. I. His first ministrations were in Vermont, where he was instrumental in establishing the churches in Bellows Falls, Rutland and Windsor. In 1820, he went to Lexington, Kentucky, where for ten years he was the rector of Christ Church, resigning the charge in 1830. After this he came to New England, and was engaged in establishing the churches at Pittsfield, Mass., and Burlington, Vt., and in the revival of those at Lanesborough, Mass., and Portland, Maine. In 1837, he was invited to Newark, N. J., where under him the congregation of Grace Church was collected. It was now that he became unable to preach from the presence of the cataract in both eyes, after a ministry of three years. In due time, however, a remarkably successful operation was performed by Dr. John K. Rogers of New York. This enabled him to resume active duties, and in 1844, he came to Worcester, and remained two years, during which time was erected, through his exertions, the edifice of All Saints Church. In 1848, St. Stephen's Church, in Pittsfield, which had been aforetime under his care, became vacant, when he was elected rector, and where he still officiates, in the enjoyment of excellent health. In 1824, Dr. C. received the degree of D. D. from Transylvania University, Lexington. In 1828, he published twenty ser-

mons " on the ministry, worship, and doctrines of the Prot. Epis. Church," which have gone through three editions, the last being stereotyped. At the same time thirteen miscellaneous discourses were published. In 1836, he also published twenty-seven sermons, addressed to " Presbyterians of all sects," and which were supplementary to those in the first volume. Dr. Chapman is understood to be decidedly opposed to all those doctrines and practices which have been designated as Romanizing in their tendency.

The author has pleasure in submitting the following discourse from Dr. Chapman, as a specimen of the Episcopal pulpit in Worcester. It will have special interest for his friends, and may be profitable to others.*

* It should have been stated that, in the renewed attempt to establish Episcopal worship in Worcester, the Rev. F. C. Putnam and the Rev. Henry Blackaller preceded Dr. Chapman. The former is now laboring in New Jersey, and the latter is settled in Vermont.

ASCENT TO HEAVEN DIFFICULT

DESCENT TO HELL FACILE:

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED IN

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, WORCESTER;

BY THE

REV. GEORGE T. CHAPMAN, D. D.

SERMON.

LUKE 13: 24.

Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

It is not among the least of the many faults, which serve to blight the promise of the human spring, that, instead of being principally intent upon our own concerns, we are wonderfully inclined to divine the prospects and intermeddle with the affairs of others. Unasked and undesired, advice floods in upon most individuals from innumerable fountains of wisdom. Do they embark in any enterprise? All the chances of success, or of defeat, are calculated with minute precision. Be the event what it may, it is predicted and re-predicted with a degree of solicitude, scarcely exceeded by that experienced on the part of adventurers themselves. With certain individuals, "Mind your own business" is of all others the stalest and the flattest adage. It shuts out inquiry. It presents an insuperable barrier to idle and impertinent curiosity. It is, to the busy-body, what nauseants are to the stomach, bolts and bars to a felon. If he cannot find out how others live, he hardly lives himself. If he is not made the depositary of a thousand secrets which con-

cern him not, he is consumed with spleen, and famished in the midst of plenty. What else could have tempted the man in the Gospel, to inquire of our Saviour, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" Suppose the answer had been in the affirmative. "Few" is a term so extremely indefinite, when we reflect upon the immense numbers who are destined to appear before God at the judgment day, that nothing could be more vague and uncertain than every calculation of personal indemnity derived from such a source. Suppose it had been in the negative. "Many" is liable to the same objection. It determines nothing individually. Whether applicable to the saved or to the lost, it would have utterly failed to disclose the future destiny of the inquirer. And therefore our Saviour employed it. He endeavored to stimulate him and his associates to active exertion, by the appropriate admonition, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." He repressed a curious and inquisitive spirit, with the broad, unlimited declaration, "For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

Answers, brethren, that are addressed alike to the hopes and fears of men. To their hopes—for are we directed to strive? Who can have the effrontery to assert, that this striving may not in one case as well as another prove successful? It certainly holds out the language of encouragement to me, to you, to every man, and holds it out in such a manner, and from a Being so pure, so entirely incapable of deception, that, for one, I cannot believe in its being made null and void through some mysterious, irreversible counsel. To their fears—for are we assured that many who seek will be disappointed? Who can rest satisfied with

a few feeble and irresolute efforts to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called?" Who can deem himself safe in slackening his pace on the road to heaven, when it is predicted of many, that their hopes will be blasted and their fears fulfilled? I entreat you, brethren, to reflect seriously upon these things. Neither flatter yourselves with false expectations, nor yield to the counsels of timidity or despair. Neither think it easy to ascend into heaven, nor impossible to descend into hell. It is my design, on the present occasion, to establish the converse of either proposition. I shall exhibit the difficulties presented in the one case, the facilities offered in the other; and close with a few remarks, intended to impress upon your minds the infinite value and importance of early and persevering attention to the religion of Christ.

And first. It is not easy, it is difficult to ascend into heaven. I do not mean in an ultimate point of view. I am rather persuaded that the soul of Lazarus was conveyed with the utmost ease, in the arms of angels, and finally lodged in the bosom of Abraham. But the obstacles, to which I allude are all confined to the surface of the earth. They are included within the circle of the human heart. The language of the Scripture is, "strive": the practical answer of man, I will not. There is something in the Gospel of Christ, which, to the natural understanding, is contemptible in doctrine and loathsome in practice. What is it? Strange and paradoxical as the objection may seem, the economy of our redemption is too simple. It is not sufficiently intricate and perplexed. It requires not some gigantic effort, proceeding from the puissant arm and undaunted heart of man. The riches of grace are too free

and gratuitous. Eternal life is too much the undeserved gift of God, and is obtained without money and without price. It is not to be bargained for. It is furnished at the sole expense of asking: and hence, among other reasons, its rejection. The prayer of faith is an expedient far too artless and unostentatious. It accords not with the vanity, the pride, the ambition of our fallen nature. But had it comported with the divine will to require some one great and glorious exploit, I care not how repugnant to the feelings, how irksome to flesh and blood, there would arrive, in the life of almost every sinner, a period when he would willingly forego every scruple, and gladly comply with the requisition.

I will confine myself to a single example; and it shall be selected for the very reason, that it involves the greatest of all present extremities. For what is dearer than life? With what tenacity do we cling to it. With what reluctance do we yield it up. Imagine, then, that Almighty God had demanded its voluntary relinquishment; that to enjoy his smiles and participate in the bliss of his heaven, it were previously requisite to commit the act of self-destruction. How few would hesitate to avail themselves of this sovereign remedy for all the ills of life. Revolting as it now appears, dreadful as our impressions are of rushing unbidden into the presence of our Maker; only let it be announced, as the sole medium of obtaining the rewards of eternity, so announced, as to remove every doubt in relation to its authenticity; and I will venture to assert, that the world would soon lose the larger proportion of its numbers. It would constitute that "great thing," to which the Syrian leper would have proudly resorted, when he in-

dignantly rejected the idea of "dipping seven times in Jordan," of merely washing himself in order to become clean. And why? There would be heroism in the thought. There would be a noble, what men would term a high-minded imitation of the pretended worthies of Greek and Roman story. And this would nerve the arm and steel the heart. It would sound well in human annals to be able to merit heaven; to be able, by the perpetration of one bold and daring act, to storm the strait gate and win the crown of glory. But to pray; to bend the stubborn knee, and the yet more stubborn spirit; to believe in Jesus; to look unto him as the meritorious cause of human redemption, renouncing self and exalting the Lord our righteousness;—all this is ill adapted to feed the pride and bloat the vanity of man. He sighs for renown. He would scale the fortress, into which he would disdain to creep. He has no objection to live forever; but immortality must be gained, as the Macedonian bore away the peerless diadem of the East.

Nor is the Gospel less adverse to the sensual desires of his nature. It opposes its veto to sins of every description; to those that pollute the body, as well as those that enslave the soul. And here is a difficulty, a vexatious grievance, against which mortals ever have, and I am afraid ever will protest, as a violent encroachment upon their natural appetites and passions. They might possibly strive to believe, if belief were all-sufficient. But to strive to mortify all their members, to withstand every temptation, to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them;" to do this is indeed cutting against the grain; it is rowing against the stream; it is equivalent to lopping off the arm or plucking out the eye. They pronounce it a yoke too in-

tolerable to be worn. They perceive not its necessity. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." Talk to him of the vileness and the loathsomeness of sin; and he answers, that it is pleasant to the eyes, agreeable to the palate and grateful to the touch. Tell him, in reply, that carrion itself becomes a dainty morsel in the beak of a buzzard; and he is not abashed; he is not confounded by an analogy to the fidelity of which every Christian is ready to subscribe. But, beaten in the argument, he still argues on. The senses are to him a better guide, than either reason or experience, the voice of conscience or the word of God. They all affirm of sensuality, that the end thereof is gall to the stomach and rottenness to the bones. But he scorns to apprehend what he does not feel. It will be time enough to give up pleasure when it gives up him; to surrender of necessity and not of choice.

Yes, brethren, the gate of heaven is too strait to admit the passage of a sensualist. He cannot crowd through with one darling vice attached to his character; and therefore he prefers to loiter without; therefore an obstacle is presented to his entrance, which, not all the promises nor all the threatenings of the Gospel, can prevail upon him to overcome. In vain does eternity smile upon the one hand, and frown upon the other. He is neither lured by visions of bliss, nor terrified by prospects of misery. He strives; but it is upon the broad road that leads to destruction. Here are no difficulties. Here are facilities enough and to spare. But when he has arrived at the end of his race, he will find, that although the descent to hell has been ever so

smooth, there is neither downy bed nor silken fetters within its fearful abodes.

In commencing a few observations upon the second branch of the discourse, it is necessary to premise, that there is a class of sinners, less corrupt and hardened, who flatter themselves with the conviction, that they are striving to fulfill the requisitions of the text. Are they then to be considered as having approximated to the portal it describes? More important still! Are they universally destined to enter in? Our blessed Saviour resolves the inquiry in these words of solemn and alarming import, "Many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." In endeavoring to account for this, I shall submit no verbal analysis of the difference existing between striving and seeking. I am indeed satisfied that the words are used as synonymes. They mean the same thing, and clearly show, that it is very possible to come to a fearful end, although the skies are clear, and the sun shines, and the fondest anticipations beguile the soul. I have already adverted to these, as among the causes, to the facilities which cluster upon the broad road, and that assume every Protean form and chameleon hue, lest the hapless victim should be diverted from their pursuit, and by any means turn his back upon them.

One among the number is of this nature. The sinner is frequently to be found traveling in that fatal path, entirely unconscious of his real condition. It is thus, when his salvation is supposed to depend upon the mere principles of worldly wisdom. In conformity to its dictates, the servant is entitled to his wages, the physician to his fee, the statesman to the emoluments of his office. And a similar process

of reasoning is applied to the concerns of eternity. Its rewards are anticipated on the ground of personal desert. The good works of this life are thought to purchase an indefeasible right to the inheritance of the saints in light. But what a wretched perversion of the holy Scripture must this be, when its language is so clear and perspicuous, that he who runs may read; "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." "After that the kindness and love of God, our Saviour, toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do."

There is indeed not one single passage in the Bible, that will fairly admit of a different construction. And how loose must be the theology of that man, how passionless his love, how cold and inanimate the pretended warmth of his gratitude, who purposely excludes a Saviour from being the sole meritorious cause of his redemption; who receives him for a prophet, but rejects him as a priest, offering his own body upon the tree, a sacrifice for all. Moses would be entitled to equal praise; for he also was a prophet and a lawgiver. And has it come to this, that Moses is as much our Saviour as Christ? Is it nothing to have vailed his divinity in a servant's form? Is it nothing for him to have been "a man of sorrows" and "acquainted with grief"? Is it nothing to have died as never man died, treading the winepress of the wrath of God, and then enduring the collected weight and burden of all human guilt? Surely, brethren,

there must have been some necessity for the infliction of this unparalleled suffering, or it would never have transpired. "Surely," as Isaiah prophetically announced, "he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows"; "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Tell me not then of the sinner having ceased from his downward career, who overlooks these essential features of the mystery of godliness. He is only following the multitude. He may have certain virtues, such virtues as may challenge the applause of the world. But the grace required in the Gospel, he has it not. Of this best furniture of the soul he is destitute. For grace proceedeth of faith, that faith which elevates Christ to be king in Zion, the Saviour of his people, the hope and the consolation of Israel. I may love the tyrant who spares my life. But in the estimation of others, he will be a tyrant still. The world may be much indebted to sinners, who cultivate gentle manners and evince philanthropic feelings; and there are many such. But in the estimation of that God, who exacts unfeigned faith in his Son, who demands that every moral and religious duty should be performed in the name, which is above every other name, they will be sinners still. To profit him, to make him our debtor, transcends all the labor of our hands and head. If we would be saved, we must consequently take salvation as a free gift, ordained and bestowed for the worthy sake and merits of our august Redeemer.

Others again are actually journeying on the broad road, owing to another kindred facility which it affords. Contra-

ry to the experience of those who adhere to the narrow way, it admits of their reconciling the well known incongruity of serving two masters. One while, they are all for Christ. From their expressions, you would think that his was the only liberty in which they delighted. To their eyes, he is the Rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley; to their taste, sweeter than honey and the honey-comb; to their souls, the heavenly manna and the bread of life. At another, trace them throughout their intercourse with their fellow men, and their practice will soon appear to be at open variance with their professions. They can defraud a little, and prevaricate a little, and slander more. They can rival the worst lover of the world in selfish feelings, morose passions and sordid habits. They can do much for the souls, but nothing for the bodies of the poor. They can wear their livery untarnished on the Sabbath; but in the course of the week, it is soiled, and polluted, and spotted with sin. They can pray in the presence of assembled multitudes; but they pray not where God hath promised to behold in secret, and afterwards to reward openly. They can give good advice; but in point of example, they are not followers of Paul as he also was a follower of Christ. And what is the consequence? In vain do they think to seek and to serve him whom they profess to love. He is not caught by words. He is not propitiated by the melody of sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. He insists upon a residence within. His admonition is, "My son give me thy heart," not the moiety only, but thy whole heart. My throne must occupy its centre. My sceptre must extend over all its ramifications. Else will I reject your outward sighs and tears, your most solemn appeals for

mercy. Ye must enter my kingdom altogether cleansed, or the sentence of eternal exclusion shall separate us forever.

Another facility, connected with the broad road to ruin, and favoring the continuance of the sinner with the crowded throng of its votaries, is this; its counsels are the counsels of procrastination. Such is the language it ever holds out to travelers. And, predisposed as they naturally are to its reception, they are easily persuaded to connive at its falsehood. If they seek a fortune, they commence early. If they strive to gain intellectual pre-eminence, it is not at the close of a long life of ignorance. But if they are called upon to seek and strive for experimental religion, although it should be the first object to engross their thoughts, it is with many, probably with far the larger proportion of nominal Christians, the very last. Not being absolutely essential to their present existence, it is easily deferred to the period of sickness and disease, of age and infirmity. But ye need not be surprised, if the full-blown sinner, upon a dying bed, should be incapable of making his calling and election sure. Is this a time for vigorous efforts of the understanding, for cordial exercises of the heart? Who would not flinch at the cannon's mouth? Who would not be startled, unexpectedly driven to the brink of a precipice? Do ye think that the old man, with a mind attenuated as his frame, and habits rigid as his muscles, will find the evening of his life as well adapted as the morning to conciliate the divine mercy? Who would not trim the quivering lamp, on the eve of being involved in darkness? Who would not pour a little oil into its socket, if that little could convert eternal night into eternal day? Alas, brethren, under such circumstances, the descent into hell is more than easy,

it is almost certain. If, indeed, our God was like unto man, if he was not beyond all comparison, rich in mercy and plenteous in forgiveness, the eleventh hour, whether produced by sickness or by age, would always prove a most fatal hour. In all such cases, he would literally laugh at the calamity of the sinner, and mock when his fear cometh.

And even as it is, "gracious and merciful" as he is, "slow to anger and of great kindness," and a God that "repenteth him of the evil"; even now, it is seriously to be apprehended of the multitudes brought to this extremity, that "many be called, but few chosen." They strive, but it is the strife of a drowning man. They repent, but it is the repentance of fear. They believe, but it is the belief of those who believe and tremble. I know that there may be exceptions. I know that early impressions and serious thoughts, existing for a length of time, may be brought to maturity and fully ripened, just as the spirit takes its everlasting flight. But to rest secure and unagitated upon this presumption, indicates excessive weakness and credulity. The most that persons in this condition can do, is to hope. While Christians, of a longer life of faith and obedience, are certain. They have no final apprehensions, no ultimate misgivings of the soul. As a general rule, to seek effectually, is therefore to seek betimes: to strive to enter in at the last, is to strive against time and tide, against experience, and against conviction.

I might enlarge. Having confined myself to the more reputable classes of offenders, I might seize upon numerous topics, all tending to illustrate the fact of there being so many facilities on "the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death," so many presented by the attractions,

amusements and grosser vices of this world; and all of them materially aided, in their seductive properties, by the evil imaginations and sensual desires of the heart, that the innumerable throng of sinners is sadly proportioned to the width of the "wide gate," and the breadth of "the broad way." But brevity compels me to desist. Many there be, who never think of seeking or striving in another direction. Or if they do, they miserably fail, because they seek not, they strive not, in humble conformity to the will of God.

In drawing to a conclusion, the remarks to be submitted, are obvious. Ye must, brethren, embrace religion now, even to-day. Tomorrow is to be regarded as the dream of idiots, and its promises the scorn of the wise. Ye do not defer to that period the reception of your temporal food. Why, then, that which is spiritual? Is the body of more value than the soul, the scabbard than the sword, the vault than the gold it contains? Ye must embrace it with all your heart. To love in part is to hate in part. To be for Christ in one thing, and for Belial in another, shows that he reigns not Lord paramount in your affections; that he is not, in your eyes, what he is represented to be in the Scriptures, "over all, 'God, blessed forever." Ye must consequently bear true allegiance to the cross in all things, in your thoughts, in your words and in your actions. Ye must embrace all its doctrines, and ye must practice all its duties. Striving to believe, ye must employ your reason to understand, not to add to nor subtract from the Scriptures; to invent new forms of doctrine, nor to explode those which have grown old, from having stood the test of ages. "For what if some" will not "believe"? Shall their un-

belief make the faith of God without effect? Do ye imagine that it can alter the dimensions of the strait gate and the narrow way? Will they be enlarged to gratify the fastidiousness of an infidel? Is God so much in want of his future services, the services of him who hesitates not to deny the Lord that bought him, as to strike down the postern of heaven, and admit within its blessed mansions the spirit of distrust, and heresy, and unbelief? Not thus have I studied the character of God. Not thus has he revealed himself in holy oracles. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Again, brethren, striving to obey, ye must make the performance of one duty instrumental to the performance of another and another. Not one of them is to be despised, not one of them to be rejected. The same prerogative and authority pervade all. The same Being who wrote the first, hath written all the commandments. If ye break one, there is a sense in which ye break the whole. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Strait as is the gate, not less strait is the law. And would ye enter there? Ye must strive to "be perfect and entire, wanting nothing"; to be "without spot and blameless"; to be resolute and persevering unto the day of Christ, "lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

For motives, I present you, on the one hand, with the best and the fairest recorded in the book of life. I present you with heaven. And if ye have any just conceptions of what heaven is, I need name no more, to call out all the energies of the spirit, soul and body, with the view of

making it your own. While here below the Christian is "afflicted"; but there he is "comforted." Here he has enemies to contend with; there "the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest." Here he "sees through a glass darkly," he only "knows in part"; there he shall see "face to face," he "shall know even as he also is known." Here, at his best estate, he merely tastes the stream, there he shall bathe and fill the enraptured soul in the fountain of eternal joy.

I present you, on the other hand, with everlasting wo escaped, with everlasting death deprived of his victim. Enter in at the strait gate, persevere upon the narrow way. And ye shall never realize those dreadful miracles, the corrosion of the worm that destroys without destroying; the vengeance of the fire that consumes without consuming. I know not how others may calculate to endure such tortures. I know not how they can possibly content themselves in the service of a master, who will then become the chief instrument in inflicting agonies unutterable upon many that are now seduced by his arts, and charmed with his blandishments. But this I know, in relation to my office and ministry, that I will not cease to warn impenitent sinners "to flee from the wrath to come": I will not cease to implore the Lord, that, "strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man," I may have grace and power to put them upon their guard; and, if it seemeth good to him, effectually preserve them from the assaults of the most subtle as he is the most fatal enemy of human happiness. God is "not willing that any should perish"; Christ is not willing; and his faithful ambassadors are not willing. We must not, brethren, we cannot consent to be saying "peace,

peace, when there is no peace." It would be more than either your pleasure or your displeasure is worth. It would expose us to the severe rebuke, "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly." Especially when there is a cure, a sovereign and never-failing cure. It proceeds from the great Physician of souls. Would to God! that I could prevail upon you to adopt it. Would to God! that ye would this day commence in good earnest that striving for holiness and against sin, which will not only heal the wounds of your peace, but command an entrance into life eternal.

So full, so free, so unrestricted, are the means of grace, that, provided ye employ them precisely in the manner of God's appointment, there is no reason to despair of a successful result? What if the enemy be vigilant and artful? By the divine blessing, ye shall prove more than a match for his untiring eye and cunning strategy. What if the gate be confessedly strait and the way narrow? There is enough in prayer to vanquish every obstacle. There is "help laid upon one that is mighty." "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." And this may our heavenly Father, of his infinite mercy, grant. May we so strive and seek, that we may gain an entrance into the blissful regions where he dwells. And to him, the Father, to the Son and Holy Ghost, three persons and one God, shall be ascribed all honor, and glory, and dominion, and power, world without end. Amen.

§ 3. Rev. George H. Clark

Was the successor of Dr. Chapman. He came to Worcester in 1847, and performed an acceptable ministry here during the two following years. The society increased under his administration, and it was with sincere regret that they were obliged to yield to his request for a dismission. His health failing him, however, he deemed it necessary to be released from pastoral duties at least for a season.

Mr. Clark is a native of Newburyport. He was graduated at Yale College with the class of 1843. His theological studies were pursued at the Virginia Seminary. Worcester was the place of his first settlement. Advised to seek a more genial clime on account of his delicate health, he went, in 1849, to Darien, Ga., where he has since been able to minister to a society that highly appreciate his labors. He was succeeded in the pastorate of All Saints Church by the

§ 4. Rev. Nathaniel T. Bent.

He was unanimously elected rector of 'All Saints' in December, 1849, and entered immediately upon his duties. His relation to the church still continues, and he is much esteemed by his people.

Mr. Bent is a native of Milton, and a graduate of Harvard University, in the class of 1831. He received his theological education at the Episcopal Seminary in New York, and under the private tuition of Bishop Griswold.

He was ordained by this bishop as deacon, in 1833, and priest in 1835. His first settlement was in New Bedford, where he remained five years the rector of Grace Church. He was subsequently called in succession to the rectorship of St. John's Church, Charlestown; St. Thomas' Church, Taunton; and St. John's Church in Bangor, Maine. The parish to which he now ministers has about forty-five families connected with it and nearly sixty communicants.

CHAPTER XII.

SECOND METHODIST CHURCH AND MINISTRY.

§ 1. *Organization of the Church.*

Early in the year 1845, those members of the Methodist Church who resided in the north part of the town of Worcester, thought it desirable that another church of their order should be formed. The location of the new edifice for worship on Park street was at such a distance from this portion of the Methodist population, as to render it extremely inconvenient for them to attend public worship. It was supposed that the time would speedily arrive when it would be necessary to 'colonize,' and though some might deem it premature at that precise moment, yet Providence seemed to indicate, that on the whole it was an auspicious opportunity. Many believed that not only was the population of the town sufficiently large, but also that there was enough of sympathy among the people to sustain two church organizations of the same doctrines and usages, and that Methodism would only assume its proper position in the place by the immediate formation of a second church. They also hoped and believed, that more could be done for the glory of God and the salvation of men, by commencing this enterprise then, than by waiting for a more favorable season.

These were the principal reasons assigned by the active

participants in this movement, for the important steps they were about to take. They also declared their hearty fellowship with those from whom they were about to separate, and all their meetings for deliberation and action were conducted with harmony and good will.

The friends of the new organization being united and decided, presented a petition to the proper authorities of the Methodist ecclesiastical administration, asking that a member of the New England annual conference might be appointed to minister to them in holy things. The petition was received with favor, and a clergyman designated for their special service. The church was duly organized on the 20th of July, 1845. It numbered about sixty members. Until February, 1849, they held their meetings in such lecture-rooms and halls as could most conveniently be procured. On the 27th of that month, their new house of worship which had been erected on Laurel street, was, by public religious exercises, consecrated to the especial honor of Almighty God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The The Rev. Stephen Olin, D. D., preached on that occasion. The house is a neat structure of wood, and well accommodates a growing congregation. Its location on Laurel street has given designation to the society that worship there. They are now known as the "Laurel Street Methodist Episcopal Church." The first pastor appointed to minister to their spiritual wants, was the

§ 2. Rev. Richard S. Rust.

He entered upon his labors here, July 1, 1845. Diligent in the performance of his duties, and devoted to his new charge, he was acceptable as a preacher and soon won the confidence and affection of his people. But his ministry here was short. Elected to be principal of the "New Hampshire Conference Seminary," at Northfield, N. H., he accepted the appointment and was released from his prior engagement in February, 1846. His brief ministry with this church is remembered by many with much interest. He was succeeded by the

§ 3. Rev. J. W. Mowry.

This gentleman came to Worcester with more than an ordinary reputation for ability and success in the Gospel ministry, and his services here were such as not to disappoint the expectations which his coming had excited. His labors among his own people gave him a high place in their estimation, while his courteous bearing towards those of a different denomination awakened respect for him as a man and a Christian gentleman. His successor was the

§ 4. Rev. George Dunbar.

Mr. Dunbar began his ministry here in April, 1847. He was indefatigable in his exertions to secure the erection

of a house of worship for his church, and his efforts were at length crowned with success. After the house was dedicated, his congregation increased, and the present circumstances of the society are highly encouraging. At the expiration of two years, he was transferred to another field of labor. His place was supplied in April, 1849, by the

§ 5. Rev. Francis A. Griswold.

The labors of this incumbent have been highly appreciated by those whom he has served in the ministry of reconciliation, and his people will much regret his departure, which, according to the regulations of Methodist itineracy, must soon occur. The number of members now constituting this church, is about one hundred. The author sincerely regrets that his space will not allow the insertion of a sermon or parts of a sermon, as a specimen of the Second Methodist Pulpit.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHURCH OF THE UNITY.

§ 1. *Its Formation.*

In 1845, measures were adopted for forming a second Unitarian Society in Worcester. The friends of the enterprise opened a subscription for the erection of a house of worship, and in the latter part of that year and the beginning of the next, the edifice was reared and completed. Its location is eligible, its style of architecture tasteful, and its whole arrangement commodious and agreeable. In acoustic properties, or the facility with which it transmits, and the resonance which it imparts to the sounds of the human voice, it is superior to any structure of the kind within the writer's acquaintance. The house was consecrated to the worship of God, April 28, 1846. Introductory prayer by the Rev. Mr. Clark of Uxbridge; prayer of dedication by the Rev. Alonzo Hill; sermon by the Rev. Orville Dewey, D. D. of New York; closing prayer by the Rev. Mr. Wilson of Grafton. The following original hymn written by the Hon. Judge Thomas of this city, was sung on that occasion:—

The stones his pillow, Jacob slept;
A vision o'er his spirit crept,
A ladder angels trod;
Its foot upon the solid ground,
It rose, until its upper round
Pressed on the throne of God.

The dwellers of the world above,
The ministers of light and love,
Upon the sleeper wait;
The spot, by foot of seraph pressed,
Became thenceforth forever blessed,
Of Heaven itself the gate.

That ladder rest upon this place;
Here may thy presence and thy grace
O Lord, be freely given;
This spot our erring feet have trod,
Become the very house of God,
The open gate of Heaven.

The cross of Jesus, that shall be
The ladder, Lord, on which to thee
In faith and hope we rise;
By that our altar do we rear,
Bringing, in humble trust and fear,
Our hearts for sacrifice.

On the first Sabbath in June, the church celebrated the Lord's Supper for the first time. A committee had previously been appointed to make arrangements for this service. After considerable deliberation, they reported the following resolves, which were unanimously adopted by the church:

"*Resolved*, That this church has united for all means and purposes of Christian sympathy and fellowship. Therefore,

"*Resolved*, That an invitation be given to all persons present, to partake with us of the Lord's Supper."

Agreeably to these resolutions the ordinance of the Supper is always administered in the church of the Unity on the first Sabbath of every month,—all persons who wish to unite in the solemnity being invited to do so. The

§ 2. Rev. Edward E. Hale

Was ordained pastor of this church on the 29th of April, 1846. Rev. S. K. Lothrop of Boston, preached the sermon; Rev. Calvin Lincoln of Fitchburg, made the prayer of ordination; Rev. Alonzo Hill addressed the people; Rev. Ephraim Peabody of Boston, gave the charge; and Rev. John Weiss of Watertown, presented the right hand of fellowship.

Mr. Hale is a native of Boston, second son of Nathan Hale of that city. He prepared for college at the Boston Latin School, entered Harvard College in 1835, and was graduated in course, 1839. For two years he was usher in the schoool where he was fitted for college. The Rev. Dr. Palfrey and Rev. S. K. Lothrop of Boston were his instructors in theology. In 1842, he was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Boston Association. Subsequently, he devoted a year to study. In 1844, he preached several months in the city of Washington. In the spring of 1845, he first preached in Worcester. He still officiates as pastor of the church of the Unity. Some passages from a sermon preached by him, Dec. 25, 1850, will show how he is wont to clothe his thoughts, and in what manner he is accustomed to address his people.

JOY TO ALL PEOPLE:

EXTRACTS

FROM

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN THE

CHURCH OF THE UNITY,

BY THE

REV. EDWARD E. HALE.

SERMON.

LUKE 2: 10.

I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

The world of christendom is, itself, the best monument reared in honor of this day. The tree of human civilization, in all its beauty, with its every light of sciences or arts, with its countless gifts of wonder hanging upon every bough, something for every one who comes, is a "*Christmas tree.*" Its germ is in Bethlehem; its growth, its beauty, its light, its wonder, its munificence, are Christ-given. The Christ-child plants it and sustains it. And the half-unconscious world, half-sceptical, also, as it enjoys its gifts of wonder, as it dances around its blaze of beauty, or as it lies beneath its shade to rest, whenever it extols the triumphs or the prospects of our age, or our society, is really extolling Jesus, the founder of modern society—is really joining in a Christmas hymn.

It is easy to see why the Church, why preachers and writers of sacred things should always be proud to trace back her progress—the growth of her institutions of wor-

ship or of action to their humble beginning;—to follow up her broad river to the streamlet where it first flowed out from Zion's hill. "Let me," says a French preacher,* "travel back upon the course of events. I pass in review the series of the ages. I call upon the past to explain to me the position of the present. On my way, prominent points allure me. I admire the courage of the Reformers! Behind them I traverse, terror-struck, those ages of barbarism, where superstition and fanaticism assume the name, the power and the rights of religion. But, after I pass this long night, the horizon is gradually enlightened; I see the last altars of Paganism falling, I see the sceptre of the Empire prostrate before the cross of the Gospel! Through those terrible persecutions which could not shake Christian constancy, my course leads me to ancient Judea. I ask for its magnificent temple; and they direct me to a heap of smoking ruins. The second temple has mingled its ruins with the first. I find Christians where I looked for Jews. I seek for the ministers who taught this conquering faith; they are tax-gatherers, fishermen and tent-makers. I seek the master who taught them; they lead me to Calvary and point to a cross. I wish at least to visit the place of his birth, to imagine myself present in the first hour of his life; I am led to Bethlehem; I find an infant in a manger, and a few shepherds clustered around him!"

Such tracing back to the source of the Bible, the church, public worship and religious influences, is, I say, a natural and attractive study to religious men. Why should it not suggest however the following up of more histories than one? Let it suggest the tracing back of other fertilizing streams, that

* Athanase Coquerel, I, 69—71.

we may see where is their fountain. It is when the whole world of christendom makes that search, that every voice—its voices of art, of science, of literature, of business, as well as its voices of scientific morals and more formal theology, unite in proclaiming, each that it finds its fountain in that silver stream which flows from Zion. It is thus that, really, those forms of civilization, all unite with its outward religious establishments, in proclaiming and celebrating the birth of the Saviour into the world.

For, just as there are certain centres of place which seem, sometimes, to unite all the threads of human action and movement; as, at a large metropolis, it seems as if all the fibres of life of many miles around were brought together, like the fibres of unspun cotton, that from it they may be drawn out again, changed all by its influence; so is this point of time—this moment, when the infant Saviour looked into his mother's face, the point of time where all the threads of old history converge; the point from which all the threads of modern history, of modern society—tight-spun all, are drawn out again. It is not simply the cord of religious development which is newly spun there. There is not one interest of society but, as we see it, it was born there. Modern homes, modern trade, modern science, modern art, our education, our politics, our relaxation or our toil; all are rays of the Star of Bethlehem centring there as entirely as do our worship or our faith!

Direct an hour of to-day, to tracing back to that central point the history of the occupation which interests yourself most of all. Let your lesson be the finding out the Christ-given elements of your daily life; the Christmas presents they are, with which each day surrounds you.

And while we are together, let us prepare for such special examination, by running back over two or three of the lines of life which I have named in which all have a common interest, to trace them to their centre point, their point of radiation, at Bethlehem, eighteen centuries ago.

Modern Art, I say, is one of those beams. The art and poetry of the ancient world, are refracted from that central lens, and come to us from it with an intensity wholly new. To compare Christian schools of painting with the most exquisite un-christian triumphs, is to prove it without a word, so far as the arts of design go.

And I might escape other argument as to the peculiar fountain of modern poetry, by merely naming Milton, and Paradise Lost and Regained. The author of mere tact, of mere elegance of expression, may drink at classical fountains only. But that man writes, only that his works may die and the world forget them. The author who writes from genius, from the fire of his own life, I care not how boldly he may try to turn away from the Christian fountain of life, in spite of himself, drinks it in. So the poetry of Mahomet, is, in his own despite, all blazing with Christianity. So the occasional lights of modern Jewish literature, while they praise David, take their real essence of vitality from great David's greater Son. And so of Christendom's own sons when they tried hardest to disown their mother. So poor Shelley, taunted and baited by mock Christians till he disclaimed their name, sets himself to write the complement, the sequel of a master-piece of heathen poetry. To the old "Prometheus Bound," he adds "Prometheus Unbound." It is to be a master-piece of scorn, hurled at priest-craft and these priest-made gods!

And when it is done, behold its whole moral is in the spirit of the Master whom he was trying to disown! It is the Prometheus of Heathendom translated into the Prometheus of Christ:—and the work is done by one who was disowning the Saviour's name. So Parry and his companions pressed resolutely for one long day towards the North, to find at its close that they were farther South than when they started. They had done their part; but the huge sheet of ice-berg on which they traveled had moved other-ways, by the sea's relentless tides, faster than they upon its surface; and they were farther from their aim than when the day began!

So of country, government, *Law*. It had rested, after all, upon force; it was to rest, as with us it does rest, on the union of obedient children, who recognize it as an instrument of a loving Father. That Father gave to them that gift, on the morning when his angels bent from the celestial thrones, and promised, with such reason, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

So also of *Science*. It had waked but to die,—waked again but to die again. But in the union of Christian lands, nation teaches nation, century teaches century. And, if one seat of learning vanishes, it is only that a score of others, the world over, may spring up to catch up the sparks of its scattered fires, and extend their light farther and farther.

It is so again, of *Home*. Home had not a name in the old languages, because, in the old civilization, there was not the thing. There was more than poetry in the salutation to Mary, "Hail! first among women!" So lovely

was she the first woman, after her sex had been so long playthings or slaves.

And, in this way I might go on, following along the history of the different forms of life to show, that if this be the great holiday of the church, it is because it is the great holiday of the active world. The active men may forget it, but none the less, in the very activity of their day's labor, they are rendering homage to the birth of Him without whose birth their labor would have been impossible; without whose birth no Columbus would have sailed for the Indies; no Pilgrims, no Endicott have settled New England; no sense of Right Eternal have moved in the hearts of men to build up our Independence; no mutual peace between tribe and tribe, created our mutual commerce, called out our fiery cars, or our queens of the ocean; no beneficent science, speaking from age to age have lighted our furnaces, devised our engines, or trained our men each to his own place in the industrial army of our God!

I might go on; each one of you in the variety of his own life, may go on to trace this Christly dependence of ours. But it is, I remember, more for congratulation than for instruction that we are here together. We do not need to-day to study plans of salvation; we do not need to-day to descend into fields of polemics. But we may well consecrate the peace of to-day by the offices merely of rejoicing; good cheer swelling to laughter; merriment waxing even into its wildest vagaries; and tones of triumph repeated in every form.

Let the only special effort of the day be to see that each year the victory of our Lord is more abounding than ever before.

CHAPTER XIV.

SALEM STREET CHURCH AND ITS PASTOR.

§ 1. *The Organization of the Church.*

The growth of Worcester, from 1840 to 1848, was quite remarkable for an inland town in a State so long settled as Massachusetts had been. The rapid increase of population created a necessity for more religious societies and more houses of worship. Friends of evangelical piety began to speak of the importance of a fourth church of their order, sometime before any decided measures were adopted to effect the object. In 1847, the necessary steps were taken for the erection of a church edifice, which the contemplated church and society might occupy for worship. Those who thought of uniting in the new enterprise held preliminary meetings in the early part of 1848, adopted articles of faith and a covenant,* and, on the 14th of June, in that year, were organized into a church. On that occasion, the sermon was preached by the Rev. E. Smalley of the Union Church; the consecrating prayer was offered by the Rev. Dr. Nelson of Leicester; the address to the church was made by the Rev. S. Sweetser of the Central Church; and the right hand of fellowship was given by the Rev. George P. Smith of the South Church.

The number thus constituted a church was one hundred

* Appendix M.

and thirty-three. About eighty of these were members of, or regular worshipers with the Union Church, nearly thirty from the Calvinist Church, and the remainder mostly from the South Church. The movement, springing from a desire to meet the growing wants of an increasing population, was entered upon with great harmony of feeling, and its friends were numerous, strong and courageous.

The church met for worship in the City Hall until Dec. 12, 1848, when the new house which had been erected on Salem street,* was dedicated to the worship of God. The Rev. S. Sweetser preached the sermon on that occasion; the Rev. E. Smalley made the prayer of dedication; and the Rev. George P. Smith offered the concluding prayer. On the day following, the first pastor was ordained over the church; and from that period accessions have been made to their number, until a large congregation, from Sabbath to Sabbath, attend upon the ministrations of the pulpit. Their house of worship is one of the largest in the city, conveniently arranged and attractive. Their first and only pastor is the

§ 2. Rev. George Bushnell.

His ordination took place Dec. 13, 1848. Introductory prayer, by the Rev. E. Smalley of the Union Church; sermon, by the Rev. Horace Bushnell, D. D. of Hartford, brother of the candidate; ordaining prayer, by the Rev. William P. Paine of Holden; charge to the pastor, by the Rev. John Nelson, D. D. of Leicester; right hand of fel-

* The church took its designation from the name of the street on which its house of worship was erected.

lowship, by Rev. Leverett Griggs of Millbury; address to the people, by Rev. J. W. Cross of West Boylston; concluding prayer, by Rev. Mr. Corning of Clinton.

Mr. Bushnell, a native of Washington, Conn., was graduated at Yale College, in 1842. He pursued his theological studies at the seminaries in Auburn and New Haven. Having preached in several places with much acceptance, he was invited to come to Worcester early in the autumn of 1848. By vote of the Salem Street Church, which was concurred in by the Society, he was called to become their pastor and teacher. Yielding assent to their concurrent invitation, he was ordained to this solemn and responsible office, and still ministers to them in holy things.

CHAPTER XV.

MISCELLANEOUS.

§ 1. *Scotch Presbyterian Church.*

In the reign of James I., of England, a colony of Scots removed from Argyleshire, and formed a plantation in the northerly part of Ireland, near Londonderry. In their new locality they suffered much for conscience' sake. Their oppressions at length became so severe, that many of them were induced to emigrate to a land where every man might worship God according to his own convictions of duty, without molestation from his neighbor. In 1718, about one hundred families arrived in Boston, and twenty others at Casco; and these were soon followed by others, who were dispersed through the country.

A company of these emigrants, at an early date, took up their residence in Worcester. From their number a church was gathered, at about the same date of the formation of the First Church. At first they assembled for worship in the old garrison house, in the northerly part of the town. Desiring a more commodious place, they made arrangements to erect a temple which should be sacred to the worship of Almighty God. But their troubles were not yet over. Oppressed on the other side of the water, they fled hitherward; arrived here, they found the same spirit of religious persecution, only in a different form. They were disposed

to be peaceable ; but they wished to worship God in their own way. They attempted to " build him a house." Its site had been selected ; the timbers had been cut and raised ; the building was in the progress of construction. But it was never completed. No winds beat upon it to overthrow it, no floods carried it away, no fire devoured, no earthquake swallowed it. ' The inhabitants gathered tumultuously by night, and demolished the structure. Persons of consideration and respectability aided in the riotous work of violence, and the defenceless foreigners were compelled to submit to the wrong.'

The Rev. Edward Fitzgerald, from Londonderry, ministered to this church for several months. The number of communicants is supposed to have been nearly equal to those of the Congregational Church ; but they were poor, and the minister, unable to procure a proper maintenance, left the place, anterior to the settlement of Mr. Burr. A union was at one time proposed between the two infant churches, and the Presbyterian clergyman had once been invited to officiate in the pulpit vacated by the recent dismission of Mr. Gardner. The request, however, was never repeated, and soon after he left. When Mr. Burr was ordained over the First Church, there was a tacit agreement, that if the Presbyterians would aid in his support, it should be their privilege, occasionally, to listen to teachers of their own denomination. For a season the two societies worshiped in the same house. But being disappointed in their expectations of seeing one of their own clergymen occasionally in the pulpit, the Presbyterians withdrew from a connection, in which the privileges all seemed to be on one

side, and that not their own. The Rev. William Johnston was then installed as their pastor and teacher.

Obliged to contribute to the support of Mr. Burr, while heavily drawn upon to sustain their own minister, they appealed, in 1736, to the justice of their fellow townsmen for relief from a tax inconsistent with their religious privileges. The appeal did not avail to secure the end asked for, but it called forth an answer from the body petitioned, which contains some curious and instructive items.*

Failing to obtain what they regarded as precious rights, many of the Presbyterian planters left the place. Some joined those of the same denomination who founded the town of Pelham, in the county of Hampshire. These enjoyed the ministrations of the Rev. Mr. Abercrombie. Others went to Londonderry, N. H., where they could unite in worship congenial to their feelings. Others still emigrated to the State of New York, and found a home with the colony on the banks of the Unadilla.

The Rev. Mr. Johnston became the pastor of the Presbyterians in Londonderry, in 1747. In 1753 he was dismissed from that place, because the people were not able to afford him a competent support. After his dismission, he accompanied a small colony to Unadilla, on the east side of the Susquehanna river. The unfortunate emigrants were destined to meet with trials wherever they went. In their new home the horrors of Indian warfare menaced them. Unable to protect their property from the depredations of the savage, or to insure their personal safety, they abandoned the place and sought refuge in less exposed and more populous towns.

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* See this answer in full in Lincoln's History, p. 193.

"It is probable that Mr. Johnston was accompanied by some of his former parishioners, and that the town of Worcester, at the south-east corner of Otsego county, derives its name from their recollections of the place of their first American settlement."*

It is sad to reflect on the treatment which these men received from their fellow citizens. They had those qualities which should have made them welcome wherever they went. Their habits were peaceful, industrious and frugal. By an example of diligence, and by introducing useful arts, they contributed to the prosperity of the province. Says Belknap, "They brought with them the necessary materials for the manufacture of linen; and their spinning-wheels, turned by the foot, were a novelty in the country. They also introduced the culture of potatoes, which were first planted in the garden of Nathaniel Walker, of Andover." But they were met with an opposition, and treated with a contumely, as impolitic as it was unreasonable. Too feeble to resist their oppressors, they met their trials with what of patience and fortitude they could command, and finally disarmed opposition by their virtues, and secured respect for their integrity and moral worth.

§ 2. *Chapel of the State Lunatic Hospital.*

In the third annual report of the Trustees and Superintendent of this Hospital, the subject of providing religious worship for the unfortunate inmates of the institution was particularly commended to the attention of the Governor of Massachusetts and the Honorable Council. In the fourth

* See Lin. Hist., p. 194.

report, the importance of the subject was more earnestly insisted on. The Superintendent thus gave his views: "With the insane, I would as far as possible, inculcate all the habits of rational life. I wish them to attend religious worship on the Sabbath, for the same reason that other men do, for instruction in religion and virtue. In matters of religion and morality, I would deal with the insane, as with the rational mind, approve of no deception, encourage no delusions, foster no self-complacent impressions of character, dignity and power. I would improve every opportunity, when the mind is calm and the feelings kind, to impress them that they are men, to excite in their minds rational contemplations, encourage correct habits, awaken self-respect, and prompt to active duty. In aid of this, I wish them to attend religious worship, to listen to instruction from the volume of truth, and receive encouragement to calm and quiet temper from its promises of reward to upright and virtuous conduct."

In 1837, a chapel was erected for religious worship, and on the 8th of November in that year, it was solemnly dedicated to that purpose. "On the day of the dedication, about *one hundred and twenty-five* inmates were present. It was the first assemblage that had ever taken place to so great an extent, and was a most interesting meeting. At each subsequent religious meeting, about the same number have attended, not always composed of the same individuals. In the whole, about one hundred and forty have attended these meetings, and nothing has occurred to disturb the quiet, or to distinguish this from any other assembly. The inmates have been much gratified with this indulgence and proof of confidence. The favorable influence of these

meetings upon the feelings and habits of our family, has been *all* and *more* than was anticipated.

"With the fullest conviction that the principles of Christianity, rightly conceived and properly dispensed, can never injure the minds nor disturb the feelings of the insane, I am confident that, if a judicious course be pursued, all that has been anticipated of good will be fully realized in the religious worship of our chapel."*

Different clergymen officiated in this chapel until October, 1838. A year's experience convinced the Superintendent and the Trustees that their most sanguine expectations respecting the beneficial effects of this measure were not extravagant. During the twelve months following the dedication of the Chapel, there were three hundred and seventy-six patients in the Hospital, and of this number, *three hundred and fourteen* had attended religious worship. The services had been remarkably quiet and orderly, and, almost without exception, the patients had justified the confidence reposed in them. "The power of self-control, which many excited patients have exercised in the chapel, during the hour of worship, a control which no motive could induce them to exercise elsewhere, is itself a most forcible argument in favor of religious worship for the insane."†

Successive Annual Reports confirm the impressions thus expressed respecting the importance of divine worship for this unhappy class of our fellow citizens. Every year added force to the argument that religious exercises could

* Report of Dr. Woodward for 1837.

† Report of Dr. Woodward for 1838, p. 76.

be appreciated by, and were eminently favorable to the mental condition of the insane.

Near the close of 1843, regular evening worship was instituted, at which all the patients who desired it and who could be trusted, were permitted to be present. This has also proved to be a very happy arrangement, giving variety to the routine of daily exercises, calming the spirits that may have been excited, and preparing for the repose of peaceful slumber. The last Report submitted by Dr. Woodward contains the following emphatic testimony:

"The subject of religious worship for the insane, is no longer a problem with us. We consider it no less important, and hardly less influential with the insane than with the rational mind. The insane man who reverences religion and consults his Bible, has more self-respect, more control over his feelings, more love of order and truth, and is a better patient than he who is ignorant of the law of love given in those sacred pages, or who has been educated to disregard the institutions and duties of religion."*

The successor of Dr. Woodward is equally explicit in testifying to the desirableness of religious worship for the insane. "The religious exercises continue to be one of the most interesting and important means used in the management of this Hospital. The insane appreciate their religious advantages here. They can discriminate between what is wrong and what is right, unless it is upon the subject of their delusions. They as heartily repent of their transgressions, when made sensible of them, as any rational person. Many have a deep religious feeling, and a strict

* Thirteenth Annual Report, p. 90.

sense of justice. The judicious application of the precepts of the Gospel consoles the melancholic in his despair, gives hope to the timid, and restrains the rash in his headlong career. There are but few that would not be benefited by listening to such preaching as the 'Sermon on the Mount.' "*

Rev. Luzerne Rae

Was the first regular chaplain employed to officiate in this Hospital. His term of service commenced in October, 1838, and was completed in September, 1839. He was well qualified for the place, and his labors were highly appreciated. Dr. Woodward thus gave utterance to his sentiments respecting him. "He was a sensible, discreet man, a forcible preacher, and much admired and respected by all our household. On all occasions he commanded the attention of his audience, and during the period of his services the congregation was, without exception, quiet and respectful."

On leaving Worcester, Mr. Rae returned to Hartford, Ct.; and he is still a resident in that city. He has officiated very acceptably as one of the professors in the Deaf and Dumb Asylum there established, and also performed no slight amount of editorial labor. He was succeeded as chaplain in the Hospital here, by the

* Sixteenth Annual Report, p. 54.

Rev. Julius A. Reed.

Mr. Reed is a native of East Windsor, and a graduate of Yale College, in the class of 1831. He was for several years a home missionary in the State of Illinois. Having returned to the East on account of the illness of his wife, he was induced to engage for a season in this peculiar form of ministerial labor. He remained here until the 1st of October, 1840. His services were no less acceptable than had been those of his predecessor. He addressed himself to his remarkable audience with both affection and discretion, and was highly esteemed by those to whom he ministered. "His services were well appreciated, and he left us with the good wishes of all our family. He is a good, practical preacher, sincere and honest in his efforts to do good, and succeeded well in winning the affections and securing the confidence of his hearers. His services were always judicious and solemn, well attended to, and influential on the conduct of his audience. No disturbance ever took place in the chapel during his ministrations, and universal regret was felt in our household at his departure."*

After closing his engagement in Worcester, Mr. Reed turned his thoughts again to the great valley of the West. The cause which induced him to leave that field of labor being partially removed, he cheerfully went thither again to aid his self-denying brethren in planting Christian insti-

* Superintendent's Report, 1840, p. 85.

tutions among the rapidly increasing population in that interesting section of our country. He has for years been doing a good work in the State of Iowa, where he is still laboring. The successor of Mr. Reed was the

Rev. George Allen.

Mr. Allen is a native of Worcester. He was graduated at Yale College, with the class of 1813. In 1823, he was settled as pastor of the church in Shrewsbury. In 1839, he was dismissed from his pastoral relation to that church by advice of a mutual council, with cordial attestations to his ability and scholarship, his fidelity and success. On the retirement of Mr. Reed from the office of chaplain in the Hospital, Mr. Allen was immediately invited to succeed him in this responsible position. Yielding assent to the invitation, he entered upon his duties in October, 1840. For more than ten years he has been the acceptable minister of this peculiar and ever-varying congregation. Every evening, at half-past eight o'clock, he has worship in the chapel for all the patients who are in a condition to be present, and all the attendants and officers who can conveniently attend. The number varies from one hundred to two hundred, or more. When they are all assembled, the chaplain reads a portion of Scripture, gives out a hymn which is appropriately sung by the choir, and then offers prayer. All then retire to their respective apartments. This service is sometimes attended by visitors from the city and strangers of distinction. It is expected that the chaplain will attend two services every Sabbath. At the ringing of

the bell at half-past ten o'clock in the morning, a congregation of about three hundred assemble in the commodious and tasteful chapel, neatly attired and with respectful demeanor. The order of exercises is very nearly the same with that practiced in our congregational churches; and the main difference between the two is, that here all the services are somewhat more brief than in other congregations. The time allotted for the whole exercise does not vary much from fifty minutes. As soon as the benediction is pronounced, the hearers retire with the utmost decorum. There is not a more orderly congregation in the community. Perhaps this is the most uniformly wakeful assembly that any clergyman in New England has the privilege of addressing. Following the public service in the afternoon, there is usually a Bible-class for such attendants and patients as are disposed to be present.

With what success the present chaplain has been able to perform these duties since the autumn of 1840, will be apparent from the following statements.

"For more than three years the Rev. George Allen has officiated as chaplain to the hospital. His performances are judicious and very acceptable to our congregation; they are always interesting, and often eloquent and forcible expositions of religious truth. His views of all subjects are given with great freedom, and yet with such propriety and delicacy as to offend none and satisfy all."*

Similar statements are incorporated in each annual report of the institution down to the present time.

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* Eleventh Annual Report, p. 86.

§ 3. *Gaol Chapel.*

In connection with the County House and gaol located in Worcester, a convenient room, through the praiseworthy exertions of the Hon. John W. Lincoln, has been fitted up and set apart for religious worship. This was done several years ago. The place was opened with appropriate religious services, and is known by the name of Gaol Chapel. The prisoners every Sabbath afternoon are gathered in this room and addressed by the chaplain on those themes which are adapted to lead them to repentance and reformation. There is also a Sabbath School for their especial benefit, sustained during the year by self-denying members of churches in the city. The effect of this arrangement has been happy. The teachers are amply repaid for their labor by the evidence they have that ' their labors are not in vain in the Lord.'

Rev. George Dunbar, pastor of the Second Methodist Church, was the first chaplain in this connection. He found here an attentive audience, and often had evidence that the truths of the Gospel are admirably fitted to reach the heart even of those who have become hardened by long continued habits of transgression. He was followed by *Mr. Francis LeBaron*, who still retains this connection. Mr. LeBaron is also minister at large in Worcester, sustained principally by the Second Church and the Church of the Unity. His predecessor in this department was the Rev. Warren Burton.

§ 4. *Evangelical City Mission.*

This mission has been established about one year. The experiment thus far has been gratifying. Some years since, benevolent individuals were impressed with the conviction that there was great need of such a mission, and the Rev. Mr. Fox, a man of lovely spirit and excellent qualifications in other respects for such a service, was employed for six months. He labored in season and out of season, and, while his health permitted, like his Master, went about doing good. But he was not permitted to continue by reason of death. His memory is still precious to many a heart.

About one year since, Dea. Moses Brigham, who had been licensed to preach by the Worcester Central Association and who was thought to have peculiar qualifications for such a work, was employed to labor as a city missionary. His first semi-annual report showed that he had been indefatigable in his duties; and evidence is not wanting that his exertions have been much blessed. He is still engaged in this capacity and has a promising field of labor before him.

§ 5. *Friends' Meeting.*

The number of families in Worcester who belong to the denomination of Quakers, is not large; but they have erected a tasteful and commodious house of worship and have meetings regularly on the Sabbath and during the week. They have no settled pastor, but from time to time

enjoy the ministrations of some of the regularly authorized preachers of the denomination. Their meetings are characterized by quiet and decorum. Some of their speakers have the reputation of being very eloquent. At some of their gatherings, the audible utterance of thought gives place to silent meditation. They have no articles of faith in distinction from the sentiments embodied in their standard works. These will be found in Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism.

§ 6. *Second Advent Church.*

As early as 1840, individuals in Worcester were interested in what was called 'second advent preaching.' As the time drew near when they anticipated the second coming of Christ for a personal and visible reign on earth, their numbers and zeal increased. Many were disappointed that the time passed by, while yet the great event predicted did not occur. Recasting and recalculating their prophetic periods and figures, they ascertained that some mistakes had been made, and finally settled down in the conclusion that the important period would, at the longest, soon arrive. In the autumn of 1850, they organized a church; and since that period they have had for their spiritual teacher, Elder I. Shipman, who was formerly settled in New Hampshire. About forty members belong to the church. On their admission they assented to the following article of faith. This is intended to be distinctive of their peculiar views. It was adopted, Oct. 28, 1850.

"We the undersigned, 'who are looking for that blessed

hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;' *Titus* 2 : 13 ; *Hebrews* 9 : 28 : that we may walk in harmony, and more effectually advance the cause of our Saviour on earth, and spread the light of divine truth, live in peace with all Christians, and all men as far as in us lies, and labor for the conversion and salvation of sinners, and lead a life of holiness and devotion to God ;—agree to receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the rule of our faith and practice, believing that reference to their sacred teachings will be sufficient to guide us in all the duties of life, as the members of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The author has now completed, as he could, the plan proposed at the beginning of this volume. Various and interesting reflections are suggested by the numerous topics that have passed in review before the reader's mind; but they cannot now be particularly noticed. The brief history given of each church will have special interest for those now connected with it, and, it is hoped, a general interest for others. Each biographical sketch recorded in the foregoing pages, will awaken pleasant or touching memories in the circle of friendship where its subject moved or in which he now moves ; and every sermon herein published will find a class of readers who entertain a special regard for its author. If the work shall serve the purpose of so bringing the Past before the Present, that the latter shall be the better for it and the Future the happier, the writer will con-

gratulate himself that his labor is not futile. To a single fact he would direct the reader's particular attention: of the more than fifty ministers who have been settled in Worcester, not one has disgraced his profession by a life of immorality. Those who are dead, so far as we know, have died in peace and are remembered with interest, and those who yet live, maintain a fair and honorable standing in the community. In this respect may the future reproduce the past.

One word as to the value of such facts as are recorded in this volume. "Many of these little things which we speak of, are little only in size and name. They are full of rich meaning. They are graphic and characteristic in a high degree. They suggest far more than they say. They illustrate classes of men and ages of time. They are small but brilliant lights on the walls of the past, pouring floods of splendor from their little niches on the vast abysses around them." (Am. Qu. Review, 1836.) "We shall stand in a true relation to the present and the future, by standing in a right relation to the past. For he who has been back into the past, comes down again into the present midst, and is prepared to travel on into the future, loaden with the experiences of ages gone, and made wise by the observation of principles in their beginnings, their workings, and their remote results. He is able to bring into contact early causes and their distant effects, and tracing the former through their intricate windings down to the latter, to learn how it was that purposes so often produced their contraries—hope despair, and despair hope. He has learned this truth for the consolation and strengthening of his soul,

that, sooner or later, evil recoils upon itself, and that if indirectness and wrong be not visited upon the father, it will be upon the children; and through this wide view, he is enabled to see how

> ——from good still good proceeds;
> Direct or by occasion." (Am. Qu. Observer, I, 41.)

APPENDIX.

NOTE A, *p.* 14.

ORDER OF THE GREAT AND GENERAL COURT. OCT. 11, 1665.
(*Lincoln.*)

THIS Court, understanding by the Petiton of Thomas Noyes, John Haynes, Josiah Haynes of Sudbury, and Nathaniel Treadaway, of Watertown, hereunto affixed, that there is a meet place for a Plantation, about ten miles from Marlborow, westward, at or near Quausetamug Pond, which, that it may be improved for that end, and not spoiled by grantinge of farms, in answer to the forsaid petition, This Court doth order, that there should be a quantitie of eight miles square layd out and reserved thereabout, in the Court's dispose, for a plantation, for the encouragement of such persons as shall appear, any time within three years from the date hereof, beeing now approved of by this Court ; and that Capt. Edward Johnson, Lieutenant Joshua ffisher, and Lieut. Thomas Noyes shall, and hereby are appointed and empowered to lay out the same and to be payd by such persons as shall appear within the terme above expressed—The Deputies have passed this with reference to the consent of our honored Magistrates hereto— WILLIAM TORREY, *Clerk.*

The Magistrates consent to a survey of the place petitioned for, and that Captaine Gookin doe joine with those mentioned of our brethren the deputies, and make return of their survey to the next General Court of Elections, who may take order therein as they shall see meete, their brethren the deputys hereto consenting.

EDW'D RAWSON, *Sect'y.*

Consented to by the deputies,

WILLIAM TORREY, *Cleric*

Note B, *p.* 16.

First Indian Deed, *July* 13 ; 1674.

Bee it known to all men by this present writing, that wee, John, alias Horrawannonit, or Quiquonassett, Sagamore of Pakachoge, and Solomon, alias, Woonaskochee, Sagamore of Tataessit, together with the consent of our kindred and people, and for and in consideration of twelve pounds of lawful money of New England, or the full value thereof, in other specie, to our content, within three months after the date hereof, well and truly to be paid, and satisfied, and pt. whereof, viz. two coats and four yards of trading cloth, valewed at twenty-six shill. wee do acknowledge to have received in hand, as earnest, of Daniel Gookin senr. of Cambr. Esqr. and of Daniel Hinchman, of Boston, Brewer, in behalf of themselves and Capt. Thomas Prentice, and St. Richard Beers, and the rest of the Genll. Courts' Committee, appointed for the management of a new plantation granted by the said Court, conteyning eight miles square, or the contents thereof, being to the westward of Marlborough, near Quansiquamond Ponds, and on each side of the Roadway leading towards Connecticott ; Now know yee, yt wee, ye sd. Jno. and Solomon, Sagamores aforesaid, and upon the terms aforesaid, have bargained, sold, aliened, enfeeoffed, and confirmed, unto ye sd Daniel Gookin, Thomas Prentice, Daniel Hinchman, Richard Beers, and ye rest of ye people admitted, or to be admitted, by ye sd committee to be inhabitants of ye new plantation, and to their heirs, executors, admrs, and assigns forever, in fee simple, all and every pt of our civill or naturall right, in all and singular the broken up land and woodlands, woods, trees, rivers, brooks, ponds, swamps, meddows, mineralls, or any other thing, or things whatsoever, lying and being within that tract of land, conteyning eight miles square or the contents thereof, to be laid out by ye sd persons or their order in time convenient. To have and to hold the premises, and every pt thereof, unto them the sd Daniel Gookin, Thomas Prentice, Daniel Hinchman, and Richard Beers, and all ye rest of ye sd Inhabitants admitted or to be admitted planters there, and unto ym and yr heirs forever, freely and absolutely, without any

lett, molestation, or disturbance, of us, or any of our kindred or people, or any claiming by, from, or under us, for evermore, as our heyrs or assigns; and wee do promise, upon the finishing ye payment to make full and ample deeds and writings for the same, according to law. In witness of the truth hereof, wee ye sd John and Solomon, alias Horrawanonitt and Woonnaskachee, have hereunto set our hands and seals, this thirteenth day of July 1674.

Signed sealed and delivered in the presence of us } Solomon, alias Woonnaskochee, seal and mark. John, alias Hoorrawanonit, mark and seal.

Onnamog, his mark, Sagamore of Occonomesett.

Namphow, his mark, Sagamore of Wamesett.

Joseph Thatcher, of Chabanakonchoie, his mark.

Nosannowitt, his mark. Noah Wiswall, present.

Full payment rec'd August 20, 1676. D. Gookin.

This deed acknowledged by the Sagamores, before Daniel Gookin, Sen. Assist. July 13.

Entered, 9. 2. 83, by Thomas Danforth, R.*

Note C, *p.* 20.

Among those who attempted the settlement of Worcester after the first unsuccessful enterprise, was Digory Serjent, who had built his house on Sagatabscot Hill, south eastward of the present town. He was a native of Sudbury, and had been a carpenter by occupation before his removal. A will made by him in 1679 is preserved on the Middlesex Records. As the list of goods and effects, strangely mingled together, presents example of the humble personal possessions of former times, and the style affords specimen of quaint peculiarity it will not be uninteresting.

'March, the 17th day, 1696. The last Will and Testament of Digory Serjent.

I Digory Serjent, being in my health and strength, and in my perfect memory, blessed be the Lord for it, these few lines may satisfy whom it may concern, that I, Digory Serjent, do freely give unto my

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* Lincoln, p. 365.

Daughter Martha Serjent, my house and land with all the rights and privileges thereunto belonging : this house and four score acre lot of land lieth within the township of Worcester : I likewise do give unto her all my goods ; one flock bed and boulster, with one rug, and two blankets and two coverlets ; six frocs ; one broad ax and one falling ax and one handsaw ; one frying pan ; one shave ; one drawing knife, one trunk and a sermon book that is at Miss Mary Masons, widow, at Boston ; with one pewter pint pot ; one washing tub ; one cow and calf, one mare, three iron wedges, two beetle rings : And if in case the Lord should see good to take away the said Digory Serjent, do leave these things above written unto George Parmenter of Sudbury to be disposed of as he shall see good, to bring up the said Digory Serjent's child : and if in case that this child should die likewise, then I do freely give my house and land with all the goods above mentioned unto George Parmenter forever, and to his heirs, to look after these things and to dispose of them as he shall see cause. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, the day and year above named. There is one gun too. Digory Serjent.

Witnessed by John Keyes, John Wetherby.'*

Note D, *p.* 50.

The following covenant, prepared by the Rev. Mr. Campbell of Oxford, and the Rev. Mr. Stone of Southborough, was adopted, Sept. 22, 1746, and afterwards subscribed by fifty members of the church.

" We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, being inhabitants of the town of Worcester, in New England, knowing that we are very prone to provoke and offend God, Most High, both in heart and life, through the prevalence of sin that dwelleth in us, and the manifold temptations from without us, for which we have great reason to be unfeignedly humble before him, from day to day, do, in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, with dependence upon the gra-

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* See Lincoln, p. 35.

cious assistance of his Holy Spirit, solemnly enter into covenant with God, and with one another, according to his holy direction, as follows:

"First: That having chosen and taken the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be our God, we will fear him, cleave to him in love, and serve him in truth, with all our *hearts*, giving up ourselves to him, to be his people, in all things to be at his direction and sovereign disposal, that we may have and hold communion with him, as members of Christ's mystical body, according to his revealed will, to our lives' end.

"Secondly: We bind ourselves to bring up our children and servants, in the knowledge and fear of God, by his instructions, according to our best abilities, and, in special, by orthodox catechisms, viz., the Assembly's at Westminster larger and shorter catechisms, that the true religion may be maintained in our families while we live; yea, and among such as shall survive us, when we are dead and gone.

"Thirdly: We furthermore promise, to keep close to the truth of Christ, endeavoring with lively affections of it in our hearts, to defend it against all opposers thereof, as God shall call us at any time thereunto; which, that we may do, we resolve to use the Holy Scriptures as our directory, whereby we may discern the mind and will of Christ, and not the new found inventions of men.

"Fourthly: We also engage ourselves, to have a careful inspection over our hearts, so as to endeavor, by virtue of the death of Christ, the mortification of our sinful passions, worldly frames, and disorderly affections, whereby we may be withdrawn from the living God.

"Fifthly: We furthermore oblige ourselves, in the faithful improvement of all our abilities and opportunities to worship God, according to the particular institutions of Christ for his church, under Gospel administrations; to give a reverend attention to the word of God; to pray unto him; to sing his praises; and to hold communion with one another, in the use of both the sacraments of the New Testament, viz. Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

"Sixthly: We likewise promise that we will peaceably submit ourselves, unto the holy discipline appointed by Christ in his church,

for offenders, obeying, according to the will of God, them that rule over us in the Lord.

"Seventhly: We also bind ourselves, to walk in love, one towards another, endeavoring our mutual edification, visiting, exhorting, comforting, as occasion serveth, any brother or sister which offends; not divulging private offences irregularly, but heedfully following the several precepts laid down by Christ for church discipline, in xviii of Matthew, 15, 16, 17; willingly forgiving all that manifest, unto the judgment of charity, that they truly repent of all their miscarriages.

"Now, the God of peace, which brought again from the dead our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us all perfect in every good word and work, to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

"Worcester, Sept. 22, 1746. This church this day, renewed covenant with God and with one another, and unanimously signified their assent to the above written instrument, declaring at the same time their readiness to subscribe the same, at the next meeting of the church. Present, at their desire, John Prentice, Pastor of Lancaster, John Campbell, Pastor of Oxford."

NOTE E, *p.* 98.

"A SINGULAR controversy in relation to the form of conducting the musical portion of public worship in our churches, growing out of attachment to ancient customs and resistance of innovations, arose at an early period. In its progress, it converted the harmony of Christians in the house of prayer, into discord, and though trifling in its origin, became of so much importance, as to require the frequent directory interference of town meetings, and only arrived at its conclusion when the great revolutionary struggle swallowed up all minor objects.

"Anciently, those who joined in singing the devotional poetry of

religious exercises, were dispersed through the congregation, having no place assigned them as a distinct body, and no privileges separate from their fellow worshipers. After the clergyman had read the whole psalm, he repeated the first line which was sung by those who were able to aid in the pious melody: the eldest deacon then pronounced the next line, which was sung in a similar manner, and the exercises of singing and reading went on alternately. When the advantages of education were less generally diffused than at present, the custom was established, to avoid the embarrassment resulting from the ignorance of those who were more skillful in giving sound to notes than deciphering letters. The barbarous effect produced by each individual repeating the words to such tune as was agreeable to his own taste, became apparent. The first attempt at the reformation of this 'usual way' as it was termed, was made March, 1726, when a meeting of the inhabitants was called for the purpose of considering 'in which way the congregation shall sing in future, in public, whether in the ruleable way, or in the usual way,' and the former was adopted, though not without strong opposition at the time and great discontent after. Ineffectual application having been made to the selectmen, to convene the people, for the purpose of again discussing the subject, a warrant was procured from John Minzirs, Esq., of Leicester, calling a meeting 'to see if the town will reconsider their vote concerning singing, it being of an ecclesiastical nature, which ought not to stand on our town records:' but the article was dismissed.

"The next step was, the attempt to procure the aid of some suitable person to lead and direct in the performances. It was voted, May, 1769, 'that the elder's seat be used for some persons to lead the congregation in singing.' The adherents of old usage possessed sufficient influence to negative a proposition for raising a committee to invite a qualified individual to perform this office. In March, 1770, 'it was voted, that Messrs. James McFarland, Jonathan Stone, and Ebenezer Flagg, sit in the elder's seat to lead. And on a motion made and seconded, voted unanimously, that Mr. William Swan sit in the same seat, to assist the aforesaid gentlemen in singing.' It remained, to gather the musicians to one choir, where their talents in psalmody could be better exerted than in their dispersion, and in 1773, 'the

two hind body seats, on the men's side, on the lower floor of the meeting house,' were assigned to those who sat together and conducted the singing on the Lord's day.

"The final blow was struck on the old system, by the resolution of the town Aug. 5, 1779. 'Voted, That the singers sit in the front seats in the front gallery, and those gentlemen who have heretofore sat in the front seats in said gallery, have a right to sit in the front seat and second seat below, and that said seats have said seats appropriated to said use. Voted, That said singers be requested to take said seats, and carry on singing in public worship. Voted, That the mode of singing in the congregation here, be without reading the psalms, line by line, to be sung.'

"The Sabbath succeeding the adoption of these votes, after the hymn had been read by the minister, the aged and venerable Deacon Chamberlain, unwilling to desert the custom of his fathers, rose, and read the first line according to his usual practice. The singers, prepared to carry the alteration into effect, proceeded, without pausing at its conclusion; the white haired officer of the church, with the full power of his voice, read on, until the louder notes of the collected body overpowered the attempt to resist the progress of improvement, and the deacon, deeply mortified at the triumph of musical reformation, seized his hat and retired from the meeting-house in tears. His conduct was censured by the church, and he was, for a time, deprived of its communion, for absenting himself from the public services of the Sabbath.

"The mode of reading prevailed in Boston, and throughout New England, until a few years prior to the last mentioned date, and in some places beyond it. A relic of the old custom probably still survives, in the repetition of the first line of the hymn by clergymen of the present day.

"The improved version, by President Dunster, of the translation attempted by Rev. Mr. Weld, Rev. Mr. Eliot of Roxbury, and Rev. Richard Mather of Dorchester, according to the agreement of the ministers in 1639, was used in the church here until 1761, when it was voted, 'that it would be agreeable to change the version of the Psalms, and to sing the version composed by Tate and Brady, with an appendix of scriptural hymns of Dr. Watts,' and this was begun

to be used Nov. 29, of that year. The hymns of Dr. Watts were substituted for the book before used, Jan. 20, 1790.

"The public reading of a lesson from the Scriptures, as a stated portion of the service, was not introduced into New England until near the middle of the last century. The following extract from the church records shows the period when it was first commenced here. '1749, Sept. 3. Voted, that thanks be given, by the pastor, publicly, to the Hon. John Chandler, Esq., for his present of a handsome folio Bible for the public reading of the Scriptures, which laudable custom was very unanimously come into, by the church, at one of their meetings some time before.'

"The assignment of places in church was formerly matter of grave consideration, and frequently claimed the attention of the town. In 1724, a large committee was instructed to seat the meeting-house, 'taking as the general rule the two last invoices of ratable estate, saving liberty to have due regard to principal builders as they shall see cause.' After long lapse of time, they were directed in 1733, 'to proceed and finish the meeting-house, and that the rule they principally guide themselves by, be a person's usefulness, or the station he holds in age and pay, not having regard to plurality of polls, but to real and personal estate.' In 1748, it was directed, 'that the men's seats in the body of the house be enlarged to the women's seats, that a man and woman be placed in each of the pews to be constructed, and a seat for the children be made in the body before the seats.' An article was inserted, in the warrant of April, 1750, 'to give directions that people may sit in the seats assigned to them, to prevent discord, and that they do not put themselves too forward,' and at the meeting it was voted, 'that the selectmen give tickets to such people as have not taken their seats properly, according to the last seating, directing them to sit where they ought, so as to prevent disorder, and that they fill up properly any seats lately built.' In the house erected in 1763, the right of selection of pews was given 'in the order of amounts paid for building.'"*

* Lin. Hist. Worcester, pp. 177—180.

Note F, *p.* 100.

Articles of Faith and Covenant adopted by the First Church in 1790, and still used in the admission of members. 'These articles were not inserted in the records of the church before May 23, 1815. A revision of them at that time, varied the phraseology slightly, the sentiment not at all.'—(*Lincoln.*)

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

1. I believe there is one only living and true God; a being, independent and eternal in his existence and Glory; unchangeable in his purposes; possessed of infinite power, wisdom, justice, goodness and truth; and who is the Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and Sovereign righteous Governor of the universe.

2. I believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, are clothed with divine authority, and are a perfect rule of faith and manners.

3. I believe the Scriptures teach, that God exists in a manner incomprehensible to us, under a threefold distinction, or trinity of persons, as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and that to these three persons, as the one God, all divine perfections are to be equally ascribed.

4. I believe that every individual of the human race is, by federal connection with the first man, and in consequence of his apostasy, natively dead in trespasses and sins, at enmity with God, and must be regenerated in heart, and sanctified by the agency of the Holy Ghost, in order to final salvation.

5. I believe that God hath, from the foundation of the world, ordained some, by an election, purely of grace, unto everlasting life; who, and who only, will be finally gathered into the kingdom of the Redeemer.

6. The only Redeemer of sinners, I believe, is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is strictly and properly a divine person; who, by the assumption of the human nature in union with the divine, became capable of making a meritorious and effectual sacrifice for sin, by giving himself up to the death of the cross; that by this sacrifice he became

the propitiation for the sins of men ; that, as risen from the dead, ascended and glorified, he is the Head of the Church, and the final judge of the world ; and that all who are saved will be entirely indebted to the sovereign grace of God, through the atonement.

7. I believe that those who are once regenerated and united to Christ by a true faith, will never finally fall away, but will be preserved, by divine power, and in fulfillment of God's eternal purpose of grace, unto final salvation.

8. Those who die in a state of impenitency and unbelief are, I believe, irrecoverably lost.

9. I believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general judgment, in the issue of which, the righteous will be received to the perfect and endless enjoyment of God in heaven ; and the wicked will be sentenced to be everlastingly punished in that fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels—which sentence, I believe, will be fully executed.

10. I believe in the sacraments of the Gospel dispensation,—Baptism and the Lord's Supper,—as the two ordinances instituted by Christ for the edification of his body, the Church ; that visible believers, only, who appear to receive the truth in the love of it, and to maintain a conversation becoming the Gospel, have a right of admission to the Lord's Supper; and that they, with their households, are the only proper subjects to whom Baptism is to be administered.

COVENANT.

You do now, in the presence of God, angels and men, avouch the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be your God, the object of your Supreme love, and your portion. You receive, trust in, and desire to obey, the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Redeemer. You choose the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier. You give up yourself and all that you have to God, to be his ; desiring, above all things, to be an instrument of his glory in that way which he shall see best ; and promising, through the help of divine grace, without which you can do nothing, that you will deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that you will live soberly, righteous and godly, even

unto death. You cordially join yourself as a brother [or sister] to this Church, as a true church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and engage to be subject to its discipline, so far as it is conformable to the rules Christ has given in the Gospel; and that you will walk with the members thereof, in all member-like love, watchfulness and purity.

Then doth this Church receive you into its bosom, promising you our prayers and Christian love. And we severally engage, with the help of divine grace, that we will walk with you in all brotherly watchfulness and kindness, hoping that you and we shall become more and more conformed to the example of our divine master, till we, at last, come to the perfection of holiness, in the kingdom of his glory.—AMEN.

NOTE G, *p.* 230.

THE COVENANT OF THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN WORCESTER.

"In the first place, we humbly renew the dedication of ourselves and offspring to the great God who is over all, blessed forever.

And we do hereby profess our firm belief of the holy Scriptures, contained in the Old and New Testaments: And taking them as our sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice, we do covenant to and with each other, that we will walk together as a Christian society, in the faith and order of the Gospel. And we do hereby engage, as far as in our power, for all under our care, that we will live as true disciples of Jesus Christ, in all good carriage and behavior, both towards God and towards men. Professing ourselves to be in charity with all men who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. All this we engage faithfully to perform, by divine assistance, for which we are encouraged to hope, relying on the mediation of Jesus Christ for the pardon of our manifold sins, and praying the God of all grace, through him, to strengthen and enable us to keep this, our covenant, inviolate, and to establish and settle us, that, at the second coming of Jesus, we may appear before his presence with exceeding joy."

The mode in which members are admitted into the church, is this: A candidate is propounded to the church at their communion; on the next following communion day he is admitted; and at a convenient time he subscribes to the covenant at the house of the pastor.—This communication is addressed to the deliberate reflections of the members of the society, in the hope that their minds will be seriously directed to a branch of duty to which too many are inattentive; and that the liberal regulations of our church will furnish an additional motive to the observance of a rite which commemorates the death of Christ.

NOTE H, *p.* 285.

The articles of Faith and Covenant at first adopted by the First Baptist Church have been somewhat modified; the form of confession now used is as follows:

PART FIRST.

SUMMARY OF FAITH.

ARTICLE I.—*Of God.*

1. We believe in God; supreme in his dominion; and infinite in his being and perfections; the Creator, Possessor, Upholder and Disposer of all things.

2. The mode of the Divine existence is trinity in unity, (three in one) Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; one in nature; co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal; equally worthy of divine honors and religious worship.

ARTICLE II.—*Of the Holy Scriptures.*

We believe that God has given us a revelation of his will in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; which, being given by inspiration of God, are divine authority, and our only rule of faith and practice.

ARTICLE III.—*Of Man's Primitive State.*

1. God created man at first holy, or upright, in the divine image; and he, being a rational, immortal, or living soul, was capable of serving and enjoying God.

2. The condition of life, or of the perpetuity of happiness in paradise, was perfect personal, and unceasing obedience.

3. This covenant being made with man, he was left to the freedom of his own will; that is, not by any necessity of nature constrained either to good or evil.

Article IV.—*Of Man's Fallen State.*

1. The fall of man consisted in his voluntarily transgressing the divine will, by yielding to the temptations of Satan, and eating the forbidden fruit.

2. By sin mankind lost the divine image, became debased and defiled in all the affections of the soul; and consequently morally incapable of serving or enjoying God truly, until they are renewed by grace.

3. As this depravity does not consist in a privation, or lack of the natural powers and faculties necessary to serve God, but in an entire and wicked love of sin and aversion to God and holiness; men are still under obligation of perfect obedience to all the precepts of the law and the gospel.

4. Adam being the natural head of mankind, in consequence of our relation to him we all became polluted or defiled with sin.

Article V.—*Of Election.*

1. God in mere mercy was pleased, beforetime, to devise a way for man's recovery by the gospel.

2. God's eternal purpose of election includes the subjects of salvation, with all the necessary means and qualifications for obtaining it.

Article VI.—*Of Christ's Atonement.*

1. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in order to open a way for our salvation, came down from heaven and took upon him human nature; in which nature he obeyed the law, suffered death, rose from the dead, ascended to glory, and lives to make intercession.

2. Although there is an infinite fullness in the atonement or merits of Christ, sufficient for all mankind, yet none are justified or entitled to any of the spiritual benefits of it, until they are united to Christ by faith.

3. Christ has procured all spiritual blessings for his people, which are freely bestowed on them for his sake as a mere act of grace, and not at all on account of any worthiness of their own.

Article VII.—*Of Regeneration.*

1. Although there is a most full and free declaration of mercy in the gospel to mankind, through faith and repentance, yet through the native opposition of the heart, none ever do savingly acquiesce and receive Christ until the heart be renewed.

2. Regeneration is preceded by conviction of sin and followed by holy affections and divine comfort ; but the change itself is wrought instantaneously by the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, by which its enmity is slain, and the creature disposed to receive Christ, and depend on him as the only Saviour.

Article VIII.—*Of Adoption.*

All believers are adopted, that is, received into the number, and entitled to the privileges of the sons of God.

Article IX.—*Of Justification.*

True believers are justified or treated as righteous persons through the atonement of Christ, received by faith without the deeds of the law.

Article X.—*Of Sanctification.*

Sanctification is a gradual progress in holiness, effected by the influence of the Holy Spirit in applying the truth to the hearts of believers, producing obedience.

Article XI.—*Of Perseverance.*

All true saints are kept by the power of God from final apostasy, and will persevere in faith and finally obtain salvation.

Article XII.—*Of the Lord's Day.*

The first day of the week, called the Lord's day, is the Christian Sabbath, and is to be wholly employed in the worship of God, and other religious exercises, except so much as works of necessity and mercy require.

Article XIII.—*Of the Resurrection.*

The bodies of the righteous and the wicked will be raised from the dead at the last day.

Article XIV.—*Of the Judgment.*

1. There will be immediately subsequent to the general resurrection a general and final judgment. The design of the judgment is to make a full and complete disclosure of the principles and procedure of God's government; and to exhibit the characters of men and fix their state forever.

2. The righteous will be admitted to endless happiness, and the wicked doomed to endless wo.

PART SECOND.

The Visible Church, its Order, Discipline and Ordinances.

Article I.—*Of the Church.*

1. A particular church of Christ is a number of visible saints, covenanting together, to maintain the doctrine, worship, ordinances and discipline of the gospel.

2. All such regular and orderly churches, or branches, throughout the world, form the visible catholic church, spiritual Zion, or kingdom of Christ.

3. Christ alone is head of the Church, excluding all human authority in its discipline and worship.

4. The church of Christ has power to choose and call to ordination its own officers, and discipline its members; though in difficult cases, it is proper to call the assistance and concurrence of sister churches, and one or more ministers of Christ.

Article II.—*Of Baptism.*

1. Baptism is the immersion of a credible believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by a duly ordained minister.

2. By this ordinance believers are admitted into the visible church, and entitled to all its privileges.

Article III.—*Of the Lord's Supper.*

1. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper is to be administered to none out of the visible church ; unbaptized persons, disorderly members, or those censurable for heresy are not to be admitted.

2. In this ordinance, by receiving bread and wine, consecrated by a regular minister of the gospel, we show our union and communion with Christ, and one with another.

Article IV.—*Of Church Officers.*

1. There are two officers in the Church, viz. Bishops or Elders, and Deacons, who are to serve the church in the functions attached to their offices.

2. Ministers and deacons must be qualified according to scripture, approved by the church, and ordained by prayer and laying on hands of the presbytery.

3. The minister's work is to preach the gospel, to gather and organize churches, administer ordinances, and rule and govern in the church of God as an under shepherd.

4. It is the duty of Churches to afford to their ministers a reasonable compensation for their labor, that they may devote themselves to their work.

5. The deacon's work is to oversee the temporal concerns of the church, and in various other ways to assist the pastor in conducting the affairs of the church.

Article V.—*Of Divine Worship.*

1. The worship of God should be attended devoutly and conscientiously by all, secretly in the closet, privately in the family, and publicly in the house of God.

2. In public worship the minister should lead or govern and exercise his gift as a public teacher.

3. Every gift should be used for the mutual comfort and edification of the body.

Article VI.—*Of Discipline.*

1. Members walking disorderly, or holding doctrine contrary to the gospel, should be dealt with by way of discipline, according to the laws and order of Christ's house.

2. Personal injuries and private offences should be taken up by the individual who receives or knows them, and buried forever on private confession.

3. Public transgressors should be labored with by suitable brethren, according to gospel rule, and restored only on confession made sufficiently public to relieve the wound the cause of Christ may have sustained.

4. Though personal injuries are to be forgiven on suitable retraction, yet one indulging habits of scandalous immorality should not be restored without amendment.

5. Those who openly deny the gospel, or maintain heresy, should be admonished by letter or otherwise, and rejected if due admonition prove ineffectual.

6. A member under labor by the church should be suspended from communion until his case be decided.

7. A member refusing to submit to the judgment of the church becomes criminal, and should be dealt with accordingly.

THE COVENANT.

We do now in the presence of the great, all-seeing and most glorious God, and before angels and men, give up ourselves to the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and avouch him this day to be our God, our Father, our Saviour, and our Leader, and receive him as our portion forever.

We acknowledge our everlasting and indispensable obligation to glorify God, by living a holy, righteous, and godly life in this present world, in all our several places and relations; and we engage, by the assistance of the Divine Spirit, to improve our time, talents, and substance to his glory and the good of our fellow men: promising by divine help, to walk in our houses as becomes those professing godliness, and to maintain the worship of God in our families, and to train up those under our care in the ways of religion and virtue.

We also give up ourselves to one another in covenant, promising to conduct towards each other as brethren in Christ: watching over one another in the love of God; and to watch not only against the most gross evils, but also against all foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient; vain disputing about words and things, which gender strife; disregarding promises; tattling and backbiting; spending time idly at taverns or elsewhere; and vain and unnecessary conversation on the Lord's day; and whatsoever else is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of Christ; promising to hold communion together in the worship of God, and in the ordinances and discipline of his church, according as we are, or shall be, guided by the Spirit of God in his word; expecting that he will yet further and more gloriously open his word and the mysteries of his kingdom; applying to the blood of the everlasting covenant for the pardon of our many errors; and praying the Lord would prepare and strengthen us for every good work, to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ —to whom be glory for ever and ever—Amen.

Note I, *p.* 336.

CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE CALVINIST CHURCH.

1. We believe that there is one God, the creator and rightful disposer of all things,—existing as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that to these three persons, as the one God, all divine perfections are to be equally ascribed.

2. We believe that the Bible was given by inspiration of God, as the only unerring rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe that mankind are fallen from their original rectitude, and are, while in a state of nature, wholly destitute of that holiness which is required by the divine law.

4. We believe that Jesus Christ, the *eternal word*, became man, and by his obedience, sufferings and death, made an atonement for the sins of the world.

5. We believe that they, and they only will be saved, in consequence of the merits of Christ, who repent of sin and believe in him.

6. We believe that although the invitations of the gospel are such, that all who will, may come and take of the water of life freely, yet the wickedness of the human heart is such, that none will come, unless drawn by the special influences of the Holy Spirit.

7. We believe that the sacraments of the New Testament are, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; Baptism to be administered only to believers and their households; and the Supper only to believers in regular church standing.

8. We believe that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world; when there will be a resurrection of the dead, and when the righteous will enter on *eternal happiness*, and the wicked will be sentenced to *eternal misery*.

THE COVENANT.

You do now in the presence of God and men choose the Lord Jehovah to be your God and Father,—the Lord Jesus Christ to be your only Saviour,—the Holy Spirit to be your sanctifier. You dedicate yourself to God, unreservedly surrendering all that you have and are to his sovereign disposal,—engaging by his assistance to live henceforth to him, and not to yourself, and to aim, whatever you do, to do all to his glory. You cordially join yourself to this Church and engage to be subject to its discipline, so far as it is conformable to the gospel; and to walk with the members thereof in love, watchfulness and purity.

I, then, in the presence of God and these witnesses, and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, pronounce you a member of this branch of his visible Church, and we engage to treat you as such; to watch over you in love; praying that we all may become more and more conformed to the example of our Divine Master, till we come to the perfection of holiness in the kingdom of his glory.

Note J, *p.* 443.

CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE UNION CHURCH.

1. We believe in one God who possesses in an infinite degree all natural and moral perfections; who is the Creator, Upholder and

Governor of the universe, who is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

2. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were written under the inspiration of God, are clothed with Divine Authority, and are a perfect rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe that mankind are fallen from a state of rectitude and are, while in a state of nature, wholly destitute of that holiness which is required by the Divine Law.

4. We believe that all who are saved, will be saved, by the sovereign mercy of God, through the atonement which was effected by the obedience, sufferings and death of Christ.

5. We believe in the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

6. We believe that there are properly belonging to the Christian Religion two, and only two, Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

7. We believe that God has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, when the dead shall arise from their graves and, together with the living, shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and be adjudged, the righteous to everlasting life, and the wicked to shame and everlasting contempt.

COVENANT.

Under the influence, we trust, of the truths contained in the preceding articles; with a view to our own edification and growth in grace; with a view to honor Christ, to advance his Kingdom and to glorify God,

We do now solemnly devote ourselves to the great Jehovah in the covenant of grace; we do cordially embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, and final Judge; and the Holy Ghost as our sanctifier, comforter and guide.

We do religiously and solemnly promise that, by Divine assistance, we will renounce all fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, and walk as children of the light, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things all the days of our lives, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

We do solemnly engage to maintain mutual watchfulness over each other, in the spirit of brotherly love and christian charity; and

that, in maintaining Christ's discipline, we will adopt, execute and submit to that mode, which is pointed out in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

Thus we solemnly covenant, humbly imploring the Great Head of the Church, that he would impart to us wisdom and grace, faithfully to perform the vows which are upon us.

ASSENT OF THE CHURCH TO THE ADMISSION OF MEMBERS.

Then doth this church receive you into its bosom, promising you our prayers and christian love; and we severally engage, with the help of divine grace, that we will walk with you, in all brotherly watchfulness and kindness, hoping that you and we shall become more and more conformed to the example of our divine Master, till we, at last, come to the perfection of holiness, in the kingdom of his glory. Amen.

Note K, *p.* 463.

THE DECLARATION OF FAITH OF THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect rule of faith and practice; and that among others, it teaches the following all-important truths:

Article I.

The existence of one only living and true God, infinite in every natural and moral perfection, and that he has made himself known to his people under the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the same in essence and equal in every divine perfection.

Article II.

That man was created in a holy and happy state, but by disobedience to the law of his Creator, he not only exposed himself to personal

misery, but involved his whole posterity in the temporal and eternal consequences of sin; and as an effect of his apostasy, the whole human race possess a depraved and degenerate nature, by which they are wholly disinclined to every thing morally good, and prone to choose and delight in that which is evil.

ARTICLE III.

That the only way of salvation from this state of guilt and condemnation, is through the righteousness and atonement of JESUS CHRIST; who as the good shepherd, laid down his life for his sheep; and that those only who receive the gift of repentance and faith in Him will be finally saved by his atonement.

ARTICLE IV.

That all who ever have been, or ever will be brought to repentance and faith in the Saviour, were chosen in Christ to salvation before the foundation of the world; and that in consequence of the eternal love of God to them through the atonement, the Holy Ghost is sent to effect the work of regeneration in their hearts, without whose regenerating influence, none would ever repent or believe.

ARTICLE V.

That nothing can finally separate true believers from the love of God, but that they will be kept by His mighty power through faith unto eternal salvation.

ARTICLE VI.

That all real believers are justified only by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, without the consideration of any works of righteousness done by them, and that the full and free pardon of their sins and transgressions, is only through the merits of Christ according to the riches of his grace.

ARTICLE VII.

That although a full assurance of our interest in Christ, is not always the immediate consequence of saving faith; yet, as it is an inestimable blessing enjoyed by many in this life, we esteem it to be the indispensable duty of believers to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure: that thereby their hearts may be enlarged

with gratitude to God, and inspired with holy alacrity in all the duties of evangelical obedience.

Article VIII.

That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of any sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

Article IX.

That the first day of the week is the Lord's day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; as a preparation for that "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

Article X.

That Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances instituted by Christ, to be continued until his second coming. That none have a scriptural right to baptism until they profess their faith in Christ; that the ordinance of Baptism can be properly administered only by immersion; and is by scripture example a prerequisite to communion at the Lord's table.

Article XI.

That a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

Article XII.

That the end of the world is approaching; that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that

the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell on principles of righteousness.

COVENANT.

Now all and each of these doctrines and ordinances we look upon ourselves under the highest obligations to embrace, defend and maintain; believing it to be our duty to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind; striving together for the faith of the gospel.

And whereas, we are very sensible that our conversation both in the world and in the church ought to be as becometh the gospel of Christ, we deem it our incumbent duty to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, to exercise a conscience void of offence toward God and man, by living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

And as to our regards to each other in our church communion, we esteem it our duty to walk with each other in all humility and brotherly love, to watch over each other's conversation, to stir up one another to love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as we have opportunity, to worship God according to his revealed will; and when the case requires, to warn, rebuke and admonish one another according to the rules of the gospel.

Moreover, we think it our duty to sympathise with each other in all conditions, both inward and outward, which God in his providence may bring us into; as also to bear with one another's weaknesses, failings and infirmities, and particularly to pray for one another, and that the gospel and the ordinances thereof might be blessed to the edification and comfort of each other's souls, and for the conversion and gathering in of others to Christ. All which duties we desire to be found in the performance of, through the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit; whilst we both admire and adore the grace which has given us a name and a place in God's house better than that of sons and daughters.

NOTE L, *p.* 467.

Before receiving the right hand of fellowship, the candidate for admission into the Universalist Church, is required to answer in the

affirmative the following questions, implying a confession of faith and Covenant, which are solemnly put to him or her by the Pastor:

CONFESSION.

In becoming a member of this Church, do you sincerely profess faith in the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, and do you receive the Bible as your sufficient rule of Faith and Practice?

COVENANT.

Do you promise that you will strive to walk with this Church in the spirit of charity and brotherly love, doing your duty faithfully, and endeavoring so to live, that you may in all things adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour?

Note M.

CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE SALEM STREET CHURCH.

1. We believe that there is one God, the creator and rightful disposer of all things,—existing as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that to these three persons, as the one God, all divine perfections are to be equally ascribed.

2. We believe that the Bible was given by inspiration of God, as the only unerring rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe that mankind are fallen from their original rectitude, and are, while in a state of nature, wholly destitute of that holiness which is required by the divine law.

4. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word, became man, and by his obedience, sufferings and death, made an atonement for the sins of the world.

5. We believe that they and they only will be saved, in consequence of the merits of Christ, who repent of sin and believe in him.

6. We believe that although the invitations of the gospel are such, that all, who will, may come and take of the water of life freely, yet the wickedness of the human heart is such, that none will come, unless drawn by the special influences of the Holy Spirit.

7. We believe that the Sacraments of the New Testaments are, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Baptism to be administered only to believers and their households; and the Supper only to believers in regular church standing.

8. We believe that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world; when there will be a resurrection of the dead, and when the righteous will enter on eternal happiness, and the wicked will be sentenced to eternal misery.

THE COVENANT.

You do now in the presence of God and men, choose the Lord Jehovah to be your God and Father, the Lord Jesus Christ to be your only Saviour,—the Holy Spirit to be your Sanctifier. You dedicate yourself to God, unreservedly surrendering all that you have and are to his sovereign disposal, engaging by his assistance to live henceforth to him, and not to yourself, and to aim, whatever you do, to do all to his glory. You cordially join yourself to this Church, and engage to be subject to its discipline, so far as it is conformable to the gospel, and to walk with the members thereof in love, watchfulness and purity.

I, then, in the presence of God and these witnesses, and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, pronounce you a member of this branch of his visible Church, and we engage to treat you as such; to watch over you in love; praying that we all may become more and more conformed to the example of our Divine Master, till we come to the perfection of holiness, in the kingdom of his glory.

ERRATA.

Page 44, l. 29, for 1725, read 1727.
" 61, l. 11, for July 10, read July 20.
" 239, l. 7, for sense, read *source*.
" 247, l. 14, for 1785, read 1786.